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Chapter ? | THE ULTIMATUM

He still was not dead.

In this room, queens and kings are welcomed, but she was an exception.

She was more special than that in his eyes.

The room held proud white columns, the new castle built for this generation. All was shining brightly, the newest of novelty was grouped in here. Here, in his court.

This room, the throne room, where at all times the most important people were called at. It was a sacred place.

Aristocrats grouped around the throne, not too close, to get a slight of the king's time. They all bowed to this mighty person, as he was a living legend, powerful as his power was given to him by God himself.

His divine power made them all subjects to his will and all of his words were as if straight from Eden. He was the messenger of God's will.

He, was the one called justice. The only one who can distinguish right from wrong. He was above them all, and still the faithful servant of the Lord.

Although, as the leader of ones, he was feared and hated by others. He had many enemies as much as allies.

He was a silent devil.

Cruelty beyond no other and still, clemency was rare. A leader must be unforgiving, which he took to his rock hard heart.

His word was absolute and his will was known to be a rule.

His posture was of a mature and strict ruler, a parent of minds. He was impressive, none could say otherwise. He was respected, and if he was not, respect would be shown towards him, not even by his own means.

Yet, he was still human. And God made humans imperfect.

Even to his subjects, he was a cold stone. Warmth from him was only a myth told by witches and druids. His cruelty was said to be necessary, but others could argue that there were other ways to do the same.

He killed; only by a hand's wave. None of it mattered to him. He was indifferent to it. He considered it a part of life, where the ones who stand against him die.

That perfection was breached one day, by one person.

The great doors were pushed open, disrupting the ruler's holy silence. The nobles' faces were turned to face the door and the intruder. Their clothes were made of precious silk, made from their own fatherland's resources. The sound of beads and ruffle of silk and cloth came from all the room.

The guards took action; they were soon letting the spears fall on a cross, stripping the stranger from entering this sanctuary.

New guards fell behind, from the corridors, coming to secure their holy king's life. They marched, a slow but steady pace, to finally close on in the stranger.

The intruder was blocked between unsheathed iron.

The knights that stood in the outline of the throne room all stepped before, cutting through the sea of nobles and pushing them behind the knights.

A passage on the carpet was created towards the ruler.

The King wanted to see the stranger's face.

The stillness overwhelmed the nobility, the stranger was forced to walk before.

The person said nothing, no one could ever recognize who that might be.

An assassin? A mercenary? An enemy?

Questions formed into whispers swarmed in the throne room.

The King looked at the stranger, his eyes instruments of judgment.

Just when the person arrived at the end, the person suddenly bowed before the ruler.

The guards have pointed the spears at an instant at the stranger, the rash action considered as a threat. The knights from behind had their swords at the stranger's back.

The throne room held hundreds of nobles and yet, the sound could hold a ghost as soprano.

The King raised his hand to face his palm, next to his ear. A sign of écoute.

His lips moved to say with a melodic, calm voice, "Pianist, play."

The pianist hearing direct orders, had no more choice than to listen. Despite the stranger's threat, the pianist's fingers once more hit the piano, soft background melody decorating the room.

However, this was not enough to relieve the tension. The threat was currently bowing to their King, not a sound pronounced.

The King layed his hand on the armchair and he stood. All the nobles' eyes were glued to their superior. Although, none dared to raise their eyes to look at his. It was taboo. It was said that the one which would look would die the next day.

The crowned man lowered his head to watch who entered his room.

"Your name?"

Those strict words were a direct threat to the stranger. The King was not someone to simply visit on a whim. Their whole act deserves a sentence in prison.

That would be the usual, if the person wouldn't uncover their hood and reveal themselves to be a woman.

A woman.

It is safe to say that he was more than surprised. A female had barged into his throne room. If this wouldn't be true, he would take it as a joke. Except, he never laughs.

His cold words broke through the tension, "Why are you here, woman?" his tone was flat and indifferent, due to experience, but his curiosity was peaked.

The woman said no sentence, her silence confusing his court even more. They were witness to a woman, probably a fool. How did this crazy woman even get here? Did her husband beat her too hard and she came looking for salvation here? The men in the court were whispering to each other, she was indeed pretty at most, but she was no extravagant thing. The ladies were communicating to her peers with her fans, thinking that this poor woman had a nerve to come here in their presence.

The only that was closed to opinions and prejudices, was the one and only king.

Seeing that there was no answer, the man came down a step to command to the guards,

"Release her."

The audible gasps and indignant responses from his own court were asking him to rethink his decision. However one single turn of his head towards them made his court hang their heads low. No one was to be compared to the will of God.

The guards hit their spears on the floor and simultaneously backed to the sides, leaving the female stranger access to the front, right where the King stood.

She finally showed response, her head raised to meet his eyes. Eyes met.

Purple ones and the woman's. The shudder of cold from his irises was evident. The taboo said that her death was near, but the woman came here for salvation.

She slowly stood, understanding that any sign of threat would be taken with physical harm. She got on her two boots, staring right into his colored vision glass.

She could now see how the king looked. He was evidently tall, his genes being a benefactor. His clothes had gold linings and a silver buckle. His collar was decorated with clips made of onyx. His golden épaulettes moved with his every motion. His medals, surrounded by black pearl and ruby. His shoes, pointy at the end had also linings made of gold and his royal crest.

Although, the most noticeable of it all was his face. He was known to be handsome, a Greek defined nose, hooded wine purple eyes that reflected the sanctity of the room, a well-defined mandible and straight black hair, pushed back to the side. His corpus was treated well, his great muscular strength hidden by his ruling clothes, making him a slim type. He was an example, an idol beyond perfections. His crown was sat next to him, to be more free of the weight.

She was witness when he moved his black gloved hands to her to incite her to speak.

She defies his stare with her confident stance and she states her reasons, "Kingdom of Prussia," she started, startling the whole court with their king's name, himself looked at her, his eyes calculating why she would dare to confront him like this, "I grant you the greatest respects I have to offer to you and I thank you, for letting me stand before your holy self."

This charade went smoother at her words, when the court began to whisper rumours and incorrect information about this woman, when she decided to cut their speech again, "However," she began, her voice decided and stubborn, "I've come with a request."

He looked at her from above, her insolence to barge in and come asking for a request was exceptionally rude and against the etiquette. The nobles began commenting louder this time, they protested about her presence here and how a peasant like herself shouldn't be here. They were throwing tissues at her, with frustration in their faces.

This all stopped when he sacrificed himself by raising his hand again. They were fools for acting out of his command and they know that his mercy was not ever-lasting, this was their last chance. So no noble riposted anymore and the room became holy again. He spoke loudly and strictly this time, his generosity not infinite, "What is that you request from me, woman?"

At this, she took a step forward and she looked straight at his face, despite the taboo, to exclaim with confidence and all seriousness, "Kaiser, marry me." She ended those dry words with silence, waiting for his answer.

The court was never more fed up, they held all kind of emotions, anger, surprise, shock, jealousy, bewilderment all towards this one female. Yet, he did not even bat an eye. He took it as naturally as being told that he's the king of this country.

After a while of cold silence, he approached the woman and he passed right by her side, saying nothing. His nonchalance to her request just humiliated her before the whole country.

It would end like this, if she didn't whisper something right when he was next to her. Whatever the woman said, made him stop in his tracks and turn around, his look the temperature of groundbreaking ice.

His deep voice resonated in the cave room, "I accept".

Everyone was shocked, from the maids to the knights. Why would his majesty even cross the thought of accepting the newcomer and unknown lady as his new bride? It was not long since he lost the previous and now he accepted her this simply.

The court was wondering if she was an acquaintance of the king, or

maybe a very rich foreign lady. She seemed to have a tint of accent in her speech. Whatever the reason was, the king had accepted to marry her. Their king is known for being objective, but to see him show emotion was new. To this, they accepted the news of their wedding happily. The wedding bells finally rang again. Their nation was saved. The country would not need to rely on that... abnormal.

The Kaiser, also knows as Kingdom of Prussia reached for her hand that was at her side and he pulled it to him. He watched her with stone eyes, his silent hate towards her showed in his scornful expression. Then, after she understood that he was not doing this of pure generosity, he bit her lip, aware of dangers that she will now face. The King instead took her hand to his lips and he layed them on hers, handing his so called admiration.

The smarter ones saw the deadly and threatening feeling coming out of the room, nothing to do with the word 'romantic'.

1880 words

Chapter 2|Back And Forward

(A/N) Back again, huh? Seems like you like seeing them suffer. Although, I cannot blame you dear reader. Everyone has their secrets, and in this book, I will be revealing some. Hang on tight to them, as secrets have no meaning if not to reveal them.

This book will show disasters, so faint of heart, leave in peace.

All refunds are nonexistent and there is no return.

May the better woman win.

(Y.N) = Your Name

(F.C)= Favorite Color

(F.S)= Favorite Song

'I hate that teacher'

A girl was storming through the long and poorly cleaned corridors with an annoyed face. Her sulky face was evident, minding clearly something. At that moment, she didn't really care if she bumped on someone. Her mood even made greetings to people she passed impossible. Strangely, in that evil emotion, she felt some déjà-vu.

'I never want to see him again or even hear about him, that old prick.' She expired fumingly out of frustration. Her anger whispered her in suggestion to find her headphones, currently hidden in her bag. She stopped next to the lockers, to lean against them her school bag. She pulled the zipper and she got out her (F.C) headphones. She looked at the used zipper, probably about to break. She didn't find much surprise in that, since she got the bag from a cheap shop. She bought it only because she found it in her favorite colour.

The headphones were not wireless, so she took a while to untangle the damn cable. She couldn't afford much right now with her pocket money, letting her at most to sigh.

The woman unlocked her phone with a quick swipe. Her phone was also old, so she was sure no one would want to steal it. Didn't stop her from settling a simple password to it.

She opened her music tracker app, and after looking for a song that could match her mood, she perceived her favorite song. She looked at it, appreciating it for being there, the only good thing that happened to her today. She didn't care what the rest said, this was the best song ever. She touched the screen to play (F.S). Just when the melody and beat started playing she instantly felt better.

Her mind did a turn and thought of her next steps. 'To the library. Great.' She regained her energy to stretch her tired body before exclaiming to herself. "Let's go..." Her feet dragged her to the supposed location of the library.

In fact, her problem was not the school library, not at all. She loved the library and it was a great place to go when she needed peace, a place where to scroll on her phone in silence without anyone looking over her shoulder, or just to rest after sleepless nights. But right now, even the library couldn't help her relax.

It was not even a while when she stood in front of a big sign. On the sign the giant letters described together «LIBRARY». In an attempt to be considered funny, some students wrote above the sign «WARNING:». So now every time someone came to pass by before this door, they could read «WARNING: LIBRARY». The idea was good, but the act was childish.

She decided to ignore it, as homework was awaiting her. She reached for the doorknob and she stepped inside the room. As she expected, she could hear a needle fall on the floor. The library was rather empty as well.

The young woman looked around and caught eye of a place to sit. She hanged on tight on her bag and with big steps, she reached the desk.

Soon after, she sat on that secluded table. Her immediate instinct was to get out her pens and her plain notebook. Her hope was set on ending this quickly.

"Stupid teacher" , she started whispering to herself, cursing her teacher's name in silence, hoping the library lady wouldn't hear her,

"Oh, Y.N have you done your homewooooork?? Oh Y.N, this isn't what I askeeeed... Y.N you'll have extra homework for tomorroooow to prepareeee..."

She whisper-yelled, frustrated. "Why do you hate me this much..?!?" Realizing her speech was just a bit too loud, she quickly turned her head around to see if someone had heard her. The coast was clear, not one person in sight. Where were the people? Whatever, it's just a library.

After leaving her stuff on the desk, she got up and she started looking for a specific book that was needed to complete the assignment. Despite her love for listening to the history lecture, the teacher just had to ruin it with this unnecessary homework.

She peered at the title of the book and she bit her lip at the unconvincing title, «HISTORY».

The title gave out all the content. Applause for the author, you described the inside perfectly.

Her critical humour was something she wouldn't be ridding herself off soon. Definitely good for any situation, is it in her mind or not.

She grabbed the cover and she pulled it out, leaving a trail of dust and more dust flying around.

She had to admit it was not a light book, the author just had not written it in summary. Usually, she would love to hear the juicy details at the lecture, but now as her homework, this only meant more work for her to deal with.

She estimated the time she would need to read it entirely and she guessed 3 months, give or take. She is confident that she reads quickly, as well.

She layed the book on the table and while she did that, she pondered if the table wasn't going to break because of the weight. It definitely creaked when she set it. Her fingers trailed on the pages, her eyes went down the index, looking for what she needed for the assignment. Finally, her fingers opened the book on the right page.

"Chapter 248: World War II"

"What a pleasant chapter in history" She joked.

Weirdly enough, the books pages turned to another page. She was indeed surprised, it turned and there was no wind. The windows were definitely closed. What...?

She tried to return to her assignments pages, but every time she reached the chapter about the Second World War, the pages returned to the previous pages.

It was annoying, so she did what some would consider to be the unforgivable. She bent the book open.

At first, it seemed to work, it was set on the pages she wanted for her homework. She had a satisfied smile on her face. Today, not even a dumb book will get the best of her. That's what she thought.

She glanced at the book and she saw it trembling. Y.N had seen too much movies to know how this would end. She threw the book to the end of the desk and right when it was at the end, the book closed as if powered on some system.

She gulped, she was lucky to not have left her fingers in those pages, or she would have them no more.

She glanced at this weird book. Definitely something not normal. She carefully reached for it, the moment her fingers touched the cover, she took her hand back to her chest.

Nothing really happened, but one can never be too careful. As if the book was digital, it opened on the page from before, wide and proud. She had a feeling this was a social experiment, and she knew that she couldn't afford to break this book.

Usually, she would just leave it, for another to play the game of this person, but the case was, that she *needed* the book.

Damn.

She glanced at the open book and thought that if she read what it was written, she could just do what she wanted and leave it. So she grabbed it and pulled it to her. Just in case if it was a jumping kind of prank, she sat on her chair and pulled it close to the desk.

Once the book was before her, she layed her eyes on it and gulped. It said,

'1771'

Nothing more.

She looked at the page, blank if not for these 4 ciphers. She thought it a waste of paper for just a date.

The challenge had to be about something about it, maybe this date was important? Something in her told her that the fact that there is just this date is wrong. There should be something more, something *else*.

She turned the page out of curiosity, to see if there was something more to this date than blank paper. She didn't have much luck, as the next page was also blank. This book was really a strange thing, how did people even let it get published, this is probably a loss of money for them.

The next page she turned contained information. She read,

'1772'

'Kingdom of Prussia and the Russian Empire. The Russian Empire was lead by Katherine II, also called Katherine the Great, one of the most powerful women in history. As for the Kingdom of Prussia...'

She was reading about Europe in the Georgian era? She knew her lot about it. She was asking herself what did this have to do with...

Some note was hanging off the next page. Maybe it was part of the social experiment she had to take part of. She agreed to finish this as quick as she could and she gripped the paper in her fist.

After trailing her finger to open the paper, she discovered pen writing. It was badly written, probably quickly done. She then read:

[Hello there Y.N. Welcome back or welcome. Depends on what you remember. I do not have time to explain it to you, so just know I summarized the information in the easiest way so you can understand, The Next. I wish I could help you more than this, but I can't risk a different turn of events. This is not the last time I talk to you. May we meet, The First.

P.S. If you for here, it means you have interacted with them. I would recommend avoiding it, but you know better. Come out of there alive, for everyone.]

For some unknown reason, this message drilled into her brain. It felt similar to remembering something, but it was deep, deep hidden in her head.

If this was the social experiment, they were good, she really was feeling something she would prefer to not. It's as if these memories were prohibited to her. The feeling was similar to thorns pushing into her head.

When would they finally end this, she was really not liking this experience. She looked around and there was still no one screaming that she just failed or won the challenge. Were they preparing something..? Would they come soon...?

The pain was so bad that she started seeing the room in black and white, some colored dots in the corner of her eyes. It seemed as if it was not going to change in a while.

Y.N had no idea of what was happening, she was just going through the pain in silence, still not a person in sight.

And it was not going to end there, as a hole just formed underneath her and the table in less than a second. It was pulling her into it and

she was unable to react. She felt drugged, on medication. The room around her was losing its white and instead turning pitch black.

Seeing what was happening, she simply layed her head on the weird book that was still open despite the wind around her. She would soon wake up, she always does.

She and the table fell into that abyss.

This weird sensation made her start to lose consciousness. This was all too weird.. She was also definitely not finishing the assignment for the teacher. She just hoped to wake up before someone else found her, the embarrassment would be too much.

Once she didn't saw the room, anymore, completely engulfed in the void, she closed her eyes to find herself one last time in her mind. All that she could find in those hidden painful memories..

"What the hell is a Reich..?"

Wo ist mein Ende?

A/N: So you have decided to continue this, it's on you. You just didn't have enough, is that it? I will just say, this book is intended to be more mature than the other, since the previous one was the first one I have written.

Of course, I have a playlist that I will be updating, if interested it, you can find it here →

If you have any questions, comment here →

Small reminder, English is not my first language.

You are encouraged to comment on this book.

Should I write a third chapter? That's for you to judge.

2097 words

And no, this Y.N didn't know Reich.

Chapter 3|Bite into it

[image]

Her fingers moved.

She felt.. grass.. and mud. The air was fresh, but not cold. The slimy mud was probably all over her jacket. She did not even remember when she got outside.

Maybe she had been taken outside to take a breather, from a panic attack? She always suspected the university nurses never knew nothing except giving band-aids and cool-pads. Taking her outside was a bit overboard in her opinion.

With some struggle, she opened one of her eyes, the sun instantly hitting her pupil. She sat up to evade the painful sun rays. She rubbed her eyes from the small tears, she really hated the sun after waking up.

Soon the smell of leaves and humidity hit her nose like a fist. She looked around to see where her colleagues were and "Wait, where did the school go to-?"

The whole building was gone, not even a trace of the students. She looked around herself and she instantly noticed, that the other buildings were also gone.

There was not even a street! Just a plain meadow. The air felt a lot cleaner than back in her neighbourhood. She got on her feet and grabbed on.. Oh great.

Her bag was open, her phone broken, the screen unusable. She saw also the table from the school. It must have.. It must have fallen with her in that hole. Finally, there was the cursed book that she had to use.

The moment where she thought about it, it went up in flames before her. She saw it catch up in flames and cremate. From its

own. She clicked her tongue, "I knew there was a damn mechanism in there."

That's all she had and it was not much. She grabbed the only useful thing, which was her bag, and she turned it over, looking at what it even had. From it fell a sandwich, some cookies, a pen and her math notebook. She wondered how the last one couldn't burn.

She released the air inside her lungs and grabbed it all. She might make some use of it. Since it looked that she was in the countryside, she will look for people. The yards were tended to after all.

She heard a rustle behind her and her eyes moved to see what it was. She was seeing a cow eating the history book. She had to blink once to understand what was going on. Moral of the story, she would not return her homework to that guy since a cow.. ate the pages.

She shook her head and began venturing north, looking for traces of human activity. She checked the moss on a tree she passed, confirming she was going on the good way. Her mentality at that moment was, "Let's meet the cow's owner..."

It was not after one hour of walking that she found a road. It was made of rocks, not cement. Wherever she was, it was definitely Europe from the type of old streets. Except the fact they looked new, she decided to overlook this minor inconvenience.

After some time of following the rocky road, she heard a sound of something big traveling though the road. Her head turned in curiosity, ready to ask for help. She perceived then a man in his 30's in a cart pulled by horses, transporting wheat from what it seemed.

As suspected, the horses stopped at her distance. She looked at her left, to look at the man who stopped. Soon after the man inquired, "Was machst du hier, Frau?"

From the many 'H' sounds and the heavy-throated 'R' sounds, she has guessed it was German. She recognized some words and understood that he was asking what she was doing here.

However, she was smarter than telling a stranger everything, so she mimicked a gesture that said that she couldn't speak. It was a precaution, but she didn't want to humiliate herself if he meant good.

He seemed to get it and his eyes hardened. It was almost as if he was upset from her 'fate'. He left the strains that held the horses and he got up from his seat. He soon got down from the cart and he stopped before he got closer.

She was relieved, since he was still a stranger to her. She glanced at how he got out a map from his pocket. He did not say anything and instead he put the map before him, letting her take it to see it.

She appreciated the gesture and she took the map, looking through her location. According to the map, there was a village soon, but walking to it would take hours.

The merchant then got out something else from his pocket; a bottle full of red ink. He pointed to it and then to the map.

She understood what he meant, as she glanced back at the map he had given her. There was indeed a red circle of ink around the village. She looked at the merchant and he pointed at himself and back at the ink.

She then smiled at his generosity and she nodded. She also showed a thumbs up, but for some reason the man looked up. She put her two hands together, in sign of thank you. He laughed and he waved it off.

She sat in the cart first and then, the man sat next to her, in the driver's seat. He made the horses start walking pulling them and the cart.

She had a piece of glass from her phone screen in her bag, just in case the merchant wasn't what he made himself be.

Nothing was going wrong in her opinion. The merchant said.. mimicked the truth when he told her that he wanted to take her to the village. She eventually relaxed and checked her surroundings.

The both passed trees, more rocky streets, woods and hills. The air was so clean that she could even smell the morning dew. It has been years since that was possible. This not consented trip to the unknown was not turning out to be terrible after-all.

She lost track of time when she perceived smoke in the distance. Or more like smokes. She stood up in the cart to catch a better view of what caused this smoke. Her predictions were correct when the road revealed at the end of it a big village.

The merchant said nothing, whistling to himself since the beginning of the ride. Seeing that she looked forward to go to the village, he hit the reins again, inciting the horses to go faster.

The moment they passed the village's gates, Y.N had two different reactions, first was the fact that she was amazed from how there are so much people in this village. Her second reaction was her being taken aback from the way they looked.. Also from the way this village looks..? No, from the way *everything* looked.

It looked so old-fashioned and still new. Alright, there was definitely something going on now. Is this the reason for her trip? Does she have to do anything here?

She looked at the people and she didn't miss the smell that came out of every and each one of them. Dirt was also all over them.

The merchant stopped the cart and she got off. Then, she thanked him by putting her two hands together. He understood her gesture and he smiled.

She was about to turn around and leave, but she was stopped by a hand on her shoulder, the grip made her turn around to face the person.

It was the merchant; he held a sack of something metallic, assumed coins. He told her something in German and she nodded and thanked him with her hands.

He waved at her and continue his route. She slightly smiled, it's nice to see that there are still some good people in this world. Few,

but some.

She strolled around the town and looking around, her suspicions began to become true. There was not a single piece of technology in here, not one person with a phone, no cars, no screens... Either she was sent to a pretend-village from the past, or she was in some video game or she got stuck in the past.

Two of these options were against her principles, but she was not dumb enough to disregard this.

Through her walk, the last option became much more believable. She was definitely in the past, the people acted strange, with standards of the past.

Another one of her observations was the fact that the people had a tiny flag hidden right above their jaw, on their cheek. It was not dirt. It was clearly the flag of Prussia.

This concluded the fact that she returned to the past. With people who had flags on their faces.

This fact made her search for coal. Just when she found it, she quickly took a piece when the person was not looking and she drew the flag. She struggled a bit, but she managed to make it believable. She put back the coal where it was and she looked for something white.

To he luck, she found something that looked like a boutique, involving makeup. She went to the back of the shop and looked in the trash. She eventually found some shades, as well as white powder. It'll do.

After she finished her disguise when she found some bottle green old coat with a lot of holes, it was evident people noticed her less. It made her wonder if the merchant from before saw that she had no flag.

She couldn't say if she spent a whole afternoon in that town, but it was now really dark. She figured that the streets were anything but safe at night. The man who was lighting up the poles went from one

to another, letting there be a source of light.

It's at this moment where she would hit, she assumed that she could find out more information of where she was and when. The history book said 1771, but she doesn't know when especially.

Except, instead of doing that, she soon heard a slap and a hit of some door.

She glanced what it was and she saw a kid.

"Ah damn.."

The kid was crying all his tears away, his clothes were ripped in some spots and she could remark also a loaf of bread next to him.

She looked to her side and it was clear that shady people began to crowd the streets. She knew better than to leave a kid. At least until he is safe.

She carefully and slowly approached him. With the light, she could see a small scar on his cheek, right where his flag was. His tears crowded his face.

When she got a bit too close to the child's liking, he looked at her and he put his loaf of bread behind his back.

He barked some mean words in German with a funny accent and he looked in his pocket for something. There was a hole in his pocket too, so he must have lost it.

She looked around and right before him, she saw a small knife. It must be his. She stepped closer and he tried to back away, to the wall.

She kneeled down and took the knife. Once he saw the hooded stranger had the knife in their hand, he gulped and looked away, ready to take on the pain.

Instead, she put the knife before her, the sharp side pointing at her, for him to take it.

It took him a while to turn his head to her to see that she was offering him his knife back. He looked at it and then he quickly took it back.

She scratched the back of her head and he finally rested seeing that she was no threat. He shivered but said nothing, still minding the stranger before him.

She had really a soft spot for kids, it would ruin her someday. It was a huge weakness. She began taking off her coat and the boy tried to squirm away. She took it off, revealing she was a woman.

He was a bit flustered since he thought that the hooded person was a man. The trench coat quickly flew in his direction. He caught it and she put her hands on her two sides.

He looked at her as if she was crazy. Although, after she motioned him to put it on, he did not try to deny the offer. He pulled it on and it was obviously too big for him, but at least it would keep him warm.

He looked at her, but she didn't mind giving it to him. After all, she had her vest from the future. He faced the floor and then he shakily offered her the loaf of bread, "Ich habe sonst nichts..."

She waved her hands before herself, telling him that she didn't want it. Her eyes ventured to his cheek and she immediately could see the form of a hand on it. She hated abuse. She really did.

She tried to tell him something, following some words she learned while being in this town, "Hallo, uh, willst du Appel???" Her accent was giving her away, but she tried.

The kid's eyes widened, quickly catching on. She was not from here, she was a foreigner! And a woman! Was she a witch? He asked with a suspicious tone, "Enthält es Gift?"

Her casual clumsiness fell to this fake language friend. "Yeah, yeah it's a gift. Ja, ja."

The kid was taken aback, but he laughed a bit. He followed her, even if carefully. They both stopped before a stand with apples. She

looked into the pouch with money that the merchant gave her before. She gave the man three coins and the man took them quickly with a grin. She got her apple and she thanked him. However, before she left, the kid grabbed her cloth and dragged her back to face the man with the stand.

The kid glared at the man before and put one hand in front waiting for something. Then she caught on, he was trying to take more money than he should. She crossed her arms and the man scoffed. He put some other coins in the kid's hand.

The boy seemed satisfied and he gave them back to her. She chuckled and she ruffled softly his hair. She gave him the apple and she said while smiling, "Your gift!"

He blinked, before taking it and laughing, "Danke, Frau..!" He took a bite from it and soon small slow bites turned into quick bites filled with enjoyment. She never saw a kid this satisfied with an apple.

They sat on the edge of a fountain and she looked around while he ate his apple. This town was great, but living here was impossible, she would need to buy a house and she had no idea how to do it in these times. Her greatest enemy right now was the language barrier. She needed German classes. How tiring..

Once the small guy finished his food he sat silent, he did not know what she wanted from him and he also had his problems right now.

After a minute of zoning out, she realized it was late and that the kid had to return home. But then she remembered that he was abused. Would the fact that she kept him this late affect him? She really hoped it wouldn't. - "Hey, lil man, uh, du want to go to Haus?"

As soon as she said that, he wanted to scream her 'no'. He didn't want to return there. His parents didn't want him either, he was useless and he only ate their food. His many siblings had talents to contribute to the house's wealth, but he had nothing. They basically threw him out. Yet, after he remembered that he couldn't burden this woman asking her for a job with lodging, he returned to his

shrunk self. He replied shortly, "...Nein. Ich habe kein Haus."

She sighed, she couldn't ask this to a kid she just met to come with her, but she had to try at least. She took his hand and she asked carefully, "..Willst du a new Haus?" She could pull it off. She managed living alone, she can do it. They would both find a new house.

The moment she asked that, the kid looked at her new tears forming, "Ja, bitte..!"

She hugged the poor kid in his trench coat that was way too big for him. This would begin a new time of happiness, but also a time of danger.

»»————- ♔ ————-««

2720 words

Chapter 4| Tear You Apart

[image] [image]

»»——♔|*After the proposal*|♔————-««

Sweat dripped from her smooth forehead, as she bit her lip. She was sitting on a lounge, facing the king that was on some silk cushion on top of some other lounge across the small coffee table that separated the two.

They were both now in the drawing room, not a word being exchanged. Besides them, there were only two other servants ready to obey to their masters orders.

It was easy to affirm that the room was tense, huge controversial energy tearing through the windows of the room, through the walls and heads of the people present. The energy that surged through the man could be felt from far away. He was in an absolute hellish mood. She didn't miss an occasional gulp coming from the butler.

She read the rival she had against her. She felt a lot of opposites between her and the man that hides behind the position of the Kaiser.

Her posture was modest, she kept her legs close to her body and her hands were laying on her knees.

He was facing her, his two legs spread with a lack of elegance, his torso leaning backwards, him holding his forehead with his hand, as if he just went through something horrible. She would think that he regretted her knowing somehow this secret, if she didn't see his violet eyes staring her down between the spaces of his gloved hands. It was pure hate. The purest of all.

"You won't achieve anything.", admitted the man called Prussia.

"I beg your pardon?", she retorted surprise from the direct offense. He was not afraid to get rude, especially with a woman like her.

The strongest man of middle Europe just sat straight, his muscled back flatly reached for the cup on the table. He wrapped his fingers around the border of the porcelain cup. Instead of putting it to his flesh lips, he contemplated the liquid turning in the small recipient in rounds.

Without even laying his lilac eyes on her, he used his deep voice with his throated and heavy 'R', "Whatever your goal is, you'll never accomplish it", the attractive and dominant accent was small surprise to her, since she learned German.

She understood what he meant perfectly after long lessons of this language and despite that, she could feel this accent still being foreign, after she's been living in that place. She knew that she has learned under the common-folk accent.

She forgot to respond since she heard that soul-bending accent scratch in the tunnels of his throat. She replied according to the response she was given, "Why would I not achieve my goal?"

Her eyes shot to the ruler when a sharp teethed grin appeared all of a sudden. The cup he was once holding was now turned upside down, the tea soon spilled all over the wood floor, the sound of warm water falling on the ground.

He didn't even mind what he has just done, he just upheld the grin that has now turned into a lipped smile. It didn't take much to know that the smile was forced, so she was more focused on it than what he has just done. His voice stated, "Because I'll be there to ruin it *all* for you, woman." He spoke of it lightly, as small chatter.

Then, her eyes moved directly to the hand he was moving. He was dangerous and he was making sure she knew that. What she didn't knew, is that he also was arrogant and most importantly, sadistic.

The open hand was showing to the space next to him where he just spilled the now-cold flavored water. It was no sooner that he asked with a threat-filled voice with a sick tint of sticky sweetness, "Shouldn't you clean this mess, woman?"

Her dignity was roaring at her to refuse him, her fiery character

kept quiet. She would be damned if she acted out now. Still, she was required to listen to his command as the King of the grand country of Prussia.

She couldn't decide, so instead she tried to defy his will by doing absolutely nothing and keeping her silence. She knew, as soon as she kneeled to clean the mess he alone committed, she would be at his mercy. She would have submitted to him and he could finally get rid of her in that obedient position. He would no longer feel any need to keep her around, killing her instantly being the best option. That is what it was. Testing her.

Her lack of obedience riled his impertinence. He knew she was smart, her entrance might look as one of a dumb person, but the way he socially pressured him to accept, since she could just turn away all those nobles away from him by simple information.

However, she has forgotten one factor in this power-struggle, it's that he is Prussia. And the game she wants to play is not in her favour.

Soon he hit his knee and as if he was called, the butler ran to his knee and began cleaning up what she was tasked to dry. It would not be Prussia if he had just let this one go.

The butler suddenly was pushed by the throat to the floor, the cruel king's foot pinning down his larynx and this way blocking his airways.

"It is such a shame,"

The butler was crying loudly, pleading for his life. He was young, barely an adult, he had a life to live! He didn't want to die.

"that people can die from simple mistakes like these."

The nonchalance about his disastrous act and arrogant personality made him a monster. He was experienced, his days painted with blood on the calendar. He didn't move since the beginning of the conversation, just his leg killing his butler brutally. The talk overpowered by his impenetrable dominance. All he sought out,

was her pain.

"Cry for the people they say. But what they ignore is that the people do it to themselves."

She had to look at the guy that seemed barely younger than her getting eradicated, literally being stepped on by this man. She calculated her words, "Is that it? Have you finished your scare act? I have other things to do than staying with a man that simply kills the only reason why he's in power."

That little comment irked him, yet he was never afraid of banter. "You seem oddly relaxed with the death of another person. Are you crazy or do you have some condition I should know about, woman?" Her parallel nonchalance to his brute ways annoyed him. She was being rude, thus infuriating.

"Should the man that is literally killing another for the sake of splattered tea be asking me that question?" She watched the butler slowly faint, finally being out of oxygen. That snarky remark hit the kaiser and his laugh ringed out. It was so rude! *Oh, how badly he hated her.*

She in fact stood up and directed herself to the dying servant and knelt to help him. She reached for the kaiser's shoe and pushed it to the side, deflecting the point of the strength, for it to fall on the ground. While Prussia watched the woman help the victim of his latest attack right in front of him. How much more could he be indirectly insulted?

She threw a hand around his armpits and she pulled him up, dragging him to the row of servants all waiting for any orders, since they all came here after hearing screams. None of them held emotions, all stoic in a row. Even if she was trying to give them the butler to take care off, the people were loyal to the master of the mansion. They could not help their friend or it would be treason.

She felt desperate and she would have tried to find someone else, by dragging the guy out of the drawing room if the same man that caused all this trouble announced still looking at the lounge before him instead of looking behind him, "Heal the man, sit the woman

on the lounge and leave. All of you except the woman."

As soon as that hard voice sounded, the statues of servant all followed their tasks. They all moved around the room, quickly submitting to their masters want. She gazed at how Prussia did not react and continued to sit while waiting for everything to be done. She soon realized a couple of arms grabbed her and sat her on the type of couch, finally before him. And to top all this, they had given him *another cup of tea.*

Once they left, she was going to raise her voice at him, but he stopped her with the palm of his hand. Before, he was amused by her carelessness to danger. Now he was deeply annoyed by her fake selflessness. It wasn't the first or last time people tried charming him by their good actions.

She was just another leech sucking off his power. The best was to give her the illusion that she would get what she wants, find out what she wants, and getting rid of her never giving her nothing of what she asked. Just like any day of the week.

He did however have good sides from her marrying. From the rumours, to the political position. Marrying her is an advantage for him, he would just need to know what is her goal for him to manipulate her, making her never step out of line and keep her just as a wife.

His voice grumbled through the empty room, "The fact that you are my spouse to be, does not mean you will have any benefits from me. Not even as a wife you'll be free from me. You are trapped, such great fate you have chosen, woman."

She threw her eyes backwards in dismiss and instead, she retorted, "My fate is not this tragic since I'll still get the immense pleasure of annoying you." She knew her comments were reckless, but seeing his personality, she knew that she was safe for now with any comments.

He huffed from a rhetoric laugh. *The nerve that this bitch had.* He will enjoy making her suffer once she had no way out of this. He'll have the pleasure to remind her of her own mistake, if she survives

that is. His speech made around her offensive comment, "You'd be lucky if you saw me once a month, woman. Do you have any kind of talents? Are you acquainted with etiquette?"

She searched through her memory and she explained to him some of her skills, "I know etiquette enough. I am educated scientifically, I am fluent in English, German and.."

He groaned and hit his head, "An educated woman, that's the last thing we needed-"

She pointed out his discontent, "An issue with women being educated, your highness? Do you feel as if a woman will order you around just because she's educated?"

He exclaimed with pride, "You obviously do not get in what position you are. To let you know, I do not care, educated or not. My people however..."

He leaned on the table brutally suddenly, not even giving her the time to react to simply twirl his rough skinned finger around a strand of hair that covered her face. All for a good scare. He did saw her flinch with her eyes, but that was all her reaction.

He continued after backing away from her, softly speaking with hate thrown towards her, "..They would enjoy burning yet another *witch*. Such a great combination, our rumours could almost match. Are we fate?", he asked sarcastically with a serious face.

After a bit of silence, she replied calmly "Will you be scaring me often, your highness?"

While it was a test for her, the woman asking questions out of nowhere was annoying. "I recommend you to be on alert. This castle is not for weak women like you." He was not usually this childish, but since she wasn't running off, then it was better to simply give up the thought that he could get rid of her.

His arrogant self was back hidden in him, finally showing his true colours. He was not overly open and it was fine to him, "As my wife, you'll be expected to attend to your responsibilities. From

keeping the royal image to bearing my child. I want you to get ready for all of these, neither I or this country will wait for you to adapt." Then, he layed his hand on the armchair and he looked down on her.

"Anything else? Any threat? Any warning or fact that I should know about?" He was impressed in some twisted sense, she had not presented any fear. She even handed him hostility, she was certainly something new for him to deal with.

He took her hand and he took his time to kiss the wrist. After he pulled his head away, she felt something new on her finger, an engagement ring.

They were going to get married, despite everything. His proposal was quiet, fitting his personality. She studied the beautiful ruby ring. The red ring with his emblem printed in the side with the metal, his name on the other side.

He marked her as his, she was his property now. She did not even have to look at his hand to know he didn't have his on. He was still not accepting it, despite the romantic action.

As he stood from his intimate kiss on her skin, he stepped away saying, "A threat? You should be aware of the danger you are in yourself. Did you forget I am your enemy? If I were you, I would definitely be watching myself, since right now **I want to kill you so bad.**"

He pushed the doors to leave the drawing room and the woman in it. He then confirmed leaving the room, "The wedding is in two weeks, good luck surviving until then *if* I don't kill you first." The door closed behind him.

She know he still could hear her, so she exclaimed, "I'll be looking forward to it."

It might seem she is in bad situation, but she's doing it for them. If she survives for just a year, she'll be able to get them out of this situation.

This was nothing, her real suffering started some days since she got in these weird times to this weird world. Although, comparing that to this, surviving the kaiser will be as easy as a walk through a flowery path.

»»————-　♔Wo Ist♔　————-««
»»————-♔Mein Ende♔————-««

I thank you all for all this support! Stay tuned folks!

The photo is mine.

-DIWUbFUEIUlSHDUoWJSDIEoISHFIdEJ-

2467 words

Chapter 5|Teeth Around Neck

[image]

"Your room, miss."

She glanced at the butler in the grey suit, the dynasty crest decorating his chest. His shoes shined despite the faulty leather. He was noble with a high view.

She didn't lack manners, her silk dress defined her body was lifted to the sides to show reverence. Her lips were sealed, not wishing to reveal her arms and chest begging to be let go of that treacherous corset. Her expression was calm, until the kind-man marched away to lead the rest of the mansion into proper order.

She saw him at the end of the hall, as she rested her hand on the door handle. She pushed it and saw an expensive room revealing itself behind. The woman was witness of a fairy-tale becoming a real day.

Although, this fairy-tale was not an epitome of kindness. It was not hard to perceive that this room was definitely not cared by maids. She would be lucky if maids even passed around here. The woman knew they were trying to make her act out, effectively having a way to push her into her own death.

A wise woman, that's what she was. Her recent young years plagued by misery. A room without service would not make her lend place to another unfortunate. Her stubbornness would be soon renowned inside the palace.

Her left hand pulled the door to close, the cracking cower of the corridor now close. The room she situated herself in, contained a queen-sized bed, rosé silk cloth hanging decoratively to the pillars. A revealing curtain to her sleeping arrangements.

Her windows had spikes on the outside, letting her see through the gaps the townsfolk out of the gate. She touched the cold metal, frowning at her skin. If she was correct, her room was next to the nun quarters, humble servants of the religious social class. She could swear this was to remind her place, or she would resemble the one who watched the Streltsy hang.

She did replace her frown to a calm demeanor as soon as she saw food on her night-table. This was minimum etiquette and she was thankful of it.

Her soft hands touched a biscuits to soon break it under her white bones. The taste soon flowed to the back of her throat, salty pastry with water to serve herself. She cleared her mouth and teeth with the water from the porcelain vase.

Her calm half-closed eyes turned around the new room and the only thing she could say is that it was missing. This room was missing it.

The body turned towards the sheets of the bed, discovering a piece of paper in the middle of the feather mattress, something so improbable in a place where everything is already predicted. The paper moved with the wind that carried through the glass window. She knew it was destined to her.

The bed was large, she put a hand on the sheets and leaned to reach the bent paper. Her toes pushed the rest of her corpus up, only to touch the letter. Her motions were quick, as soon as she took the letter, she jumped off the bed.

Unfortunately, her intuition was right. Was it such a surprise when from the middle of the bed, from all sides, medium daggers pushed up, tearing the flesh of the bed. Luckily, it was not hers. She would have been wounded almost certainly if the string that was attached to the note was hidden underneath.

She groaned when she saw the string dangle from the note. Her eyes skimmed through the content of the paper. Meanwhile, feathers flew around in the room, falling at a slow rate. She was quite disappointed from the sole words that the note had,

'Rule 1 • Know Your Place'

Disappointed at the information passed through after an assassination attempt, she folded the paper into her small handbag. These people certainly ignore the concept of hospitality.

Her hands were rushed to her waist as soon as she saw the shreds of the cushions on the floor. This would necessitate at least a thorough hour of cleaning. Some dust and bits of the inside were still flying around, attaching themselves to the desk.

It was no surprise when someone came to knock to check on the noise. Y/N was skeptical on that, since it could always be the murderer trying to see if she was dead. She was still not completely sure how the Kaiser made this trap and she doubts that he kneeled to make this engine, so he must have assigned this task to someone else.

The door opened and the butler had a soldier at his back, a red collar and a high hat, the infantry officer's blade hanging by his waist. The moustache turned to the mess that happened in the room. He reached for the handle of his weapon, but was interrupted.

The butler raised a hand before the guard and lowered it, speaking calmly - "Is there something not to your liking, miss?" - she would lie if he wasn't slightly irked by the chaos.

Y/N glanced at the guard, before she lowered her eyes and bowed, raising her dress, the luxurious texture moving between her fingers. Her voice showed no anxiety, but a complete calm state of mind - "May I speak with the Kaiser?" - Her face showed resilience to the show that presented itself behind her.

The butler analyzed the room with the ruined bed tiredly and called out - "Yes, it may be better for the lady if she goes there herself." - The guard caught the cue and moved out of the way. She carefully laid out her steps outside of the door.

The guard stood firm and at ready by her side, ready to be of assistance. However, before she could leave, she rested her hand on

her chest and inquired the man of service - "Butler, I would be most grateful if you could inform me of His Majesty's present whereabouts."

The leading servant man observed her humility and ceded at her rare manners - "At this time of day, her lady is sure to encounter him in the affairs room carrying the matters of the day."

She listened carefully and thanked him with a gesture of gratitude. The guard soon guided her to the place she inquired about. He was a statue. She could only hear the sound of the decorated blade hitting his back.

The shoes that hit the marble were in a trance, his loyal service controlled by the man she was to visit. She passed decorated phenomenons, victory trophies, enemy war emblems, names of heroes of the grand battlefield. The time she spent here almost made her forget her real timeline. She was lucky back then, she didn't wish to realize this in this way.

Step after step, they found nobles, faces of distrust and dislike. She was being cast away, just by her existence.

The nobles became more frequent as closer she approached to the room with the man that wished her the worst. Did she blame him? Not really, but the egotistical made her human.

She was being carried by her own voices, trying to get forward and not get pulled backward. Just one more step, one more push and she would be in the room, safe from new threats. Her identity should be reduced to the minimum, her existence a mere whisper passed from ear to ear.

And at the end of her route, she found the door. It was sign of victory, small signs carved into the door with inscriptions of dates of their powerful Kaiser's glorious battles. She woke up the announcer and practically begged him to let her in.

The announcer was a young poor fool, swayed by a lady's charm. He was in no capacity to refuse. The wide smiled young adult assured her his will. He pushed the door of the threatening room.

Her ears perceived no more discussion coming out of there, her resolve unbreakable. She was to face the devil again, but he wasn't expecting her this time. He thought she would just swallow the sour act. Although, she chose to make herself unpredictable, as rulers hate risk.

"Now coming in, Lady Y.N L.N, fiancée of His Majesty." - the scroll rolled in, and the curtains were drawn. Time to let them see who will sit and watch.

Her flowering dress was dragged by her daring self. She didn't miss glares of men when they saw a woman enter the state affair room, but she let them watch. After all, she only cared about the one who was currently wide-eyed and gritting his teeth, trying to hide his surprise, after she stepped out of her limits.

He was right now in a grudgeful position, finding a reason as to calm this whole matter down. If he didn't, she could break his whole government down in one little set back.

His fist hit the table and men of all backgrounds sat still. He raised his tired violet poison eyes towards the woman he was to marry. It was a warning to make her take the stick and shut up, but she couldn't take the hint. He didn't humiliate himself to stand up at her presence, he raised his hand to her while he sat in his seat.

"What is it that you want, woman?"

Some men began laughing as soon as he lowered her to the status of 'woman'. She felt in a derogatory situation and would react, if the same man that called her that didn't glare in absolute dominion at his supposed subjects. He was a whole empire killing their soul, slowly caging it and compressing it in the remnants of his own mind. They were his and none of them were allowed to laugh at *his possession*. Despite how much he wanted her dead.

As soon as she saw that his fiancé showed that there is no position to laugh at his belongings, except his, she showed him the slight bit of respect that he was allowed to. In other words, she would reply to him.

The purple eyes scanned her body and gestures in expectancy of information. He would certainly make the order to execute her if she came here to ask for affection of his part. That would haunt him for years.

She opened her mouth to formally inform him - "Your Majesty, the bed I was given is in an unusable state." - Her ways to express it made the lords immediately think of the less religious reason as for this outcome. Some of them would act if not for the killer intent their cruel Kaiser gave off.

Himself was curious as why she came all the way here to tell him that. However, if this is all she had to say for her visit then it was clear what this was. A direct offense, a threat for him to look at. Her actions said that she wouldn't sit down and take it, which was for him a disadvantage.

"Is that so? And why?" - Although she may think she has all the power right now, she was still just a measly fiancée. He was the Kaiser and he had plenty of cards to play at her cute intervention. He would enjoy seeing her cry at the end of the game.

She knew that he would never step down to her level to admit his acts, so instead of waiting for him to do that, she stepped up.

Her sonor footsteps came up to him, right up to him to tower above him while he was sat. Everyone else, apart from these two were minding their own business, knowing the next one that does something, might get their hand impaled with burning iron.

His royal presence, his power and his condescending image made him a wonder, his ego being as grand as he is. He did not turn his head to watch her, the pure blood was still facing the door from the other side of the table.

She replied with a calm tone with a slight ping of restraint, her gestures were relaxed, not a sign of anger, except of her voice - "It seems that the bed was impaled from daggers that moved after I retreated myself from the bed. Twenty daggers, I believe."

His tone was low and nonchalant, still in his high view of the world.

- "Truly a pity." - He poorly hid the real reason behind a faked air of concern, which was directed to her bed. He was not convincing at all, since he was known for his lack of mercy and care. To top it, he leaned his head on his hand open hand, fingers touching his forehead.

She continued to pick on him, by picking on the details. She wanted the nobles to see what he tried to do to his fiancée so she could be left alone, until the marriage at least. - "Is it really no surprise to find that amount of daggers in my room, no less trying to impale whoever lays on the bed?"

Still, he was no contestant to underestimate. He turned around the liquid in the glass before him, a wall that no one could breach. - "What are you trying to insinuate, woman?" - His tone was bored, unwilling to go further with this conversation.

Yet, she pushed with it still, - "An assassination attempt." - she announced still not losing patience. He would listen to her in some way or another.

"Oh?" - His voice was amused, was she really trying to frame him in his own palace? That would really be inconvenient for her if she tried, and even better, a huge waste of time. - "And *who* is the one who is supposedly trying to kill you, miss?" - The word 'miss' felt oddly derogatory in his lips. Even when he called her a woman, there was still remnants of respect, but right now, the amount was hollow.

Her voice came out softly, - "I do not know." - If he could laugh, this would be the moment. He felt amused by this sudden win. Did she not even prepare an argument to counter him? He thought better of the woman he was to marry. He would have dismissed her out of the room, calling her a fool, if only she didn't throw a note on the table.

The huge offense could have been taken as an attack, but since there was no movement from the Kaiser and no weapon on the woman, the guards held at bay. Someone would think he'd read the note and called her out for dramatics, but this time, there was a slight tint of him being taken aback.

He took the note and read it, his taunting words now nonexistent. His long finger rested on the edge of the sheet, deepening into his flesh, not tearing it. His expression reflected deep concentration, thinking deeply about it.

This didn't sit right with her, did he not know about the note? He literally planned this so she would try to grab it. The words sound like him, why are the puzzles not falling into place? Her stare was still purely on him.

After he had read and reread the same thing over and over again, he threw this on the table and muttered something angrily - "....The Crest...." - he was obviously talking about the dynasty emblem, painted on the corner of the note.

At that moment, after the long and one-sided conversation, he deemed to turn his head towards her. His amethyst eyes covered her in a demanding look, his desire directed to information she possessed.

It was such a potent stare that her body forced itself to look away for a second, it felt as she was being controlled by his will against her own.

He didn't like that, he stood up, all men in the room already frozen, they stopped functioning as soon as they started the power-struggle, they were in a controlled trance, moved by the Kaiser himself. He was now towering over her, his rock hard grape eyes analyzing her behaviour while his mouth barked out in an elegant order - "Look at me while I'm talking, *dear*."

Her will to look was being severed by instincts that recommended to run away far, but she still was forced to look at him by his direct command. Not following it would mean death. His forced 'dear' was the threat that made her blood freeze instantly even though her composure was relaxed.

Her eyes turned to him as he gritted out, he forced himself to smile gently at her and that alone was scary, at these lengths she knew that she could lose her life on seconds, if his mood tested.

His voice sounded with careful worry - "My dear, next time something like this happens, will you please tell me?" - Her subconscious caught the danger he was emitting right now, warning her greatly, while also being... Forced? He was not doing that gentle expression and tone out of humour and taunt. If she could find out why, then she could use that against him.

She nodded without a word, his forced kindness disappearing. He grabbed her by the shoulder and he walked through the room forcing the woman to step quickly because of his exaggerated height, compared to hers.

He opened the door and he let her step through before he stared at her in silence and closed the door behind him. That's all she heard from him that day. This was the assassination of the first week, in which she settled.

Meanwhile, Prussia sighed behind closed doors with his loyal war generals. They were still frozen from his 'ability'.

He sighed with a hard stare while he sped his way to his big seat. He sat on it, positioning his back right in the center, his hand grabbing the armhold, his other hand running through his hair trying to push his stress away. He breathed once, and the violet toxic eyes analyzed the room before his cunning lips curled up and announced coldly, - "Gentlemen, back to our matters." -

And at that moment, the men inside that room continued the conversation that was left off before she entered the room. Everything was intact, except their memory about her ever being there.

»»————- ♔Wo Ist♔ ————-««
»»————- ♔Mein Ende♔ ————-««

"Stay tuned, he needs you to continue. . ."

3090 words

Chapter 6|Prey's Cry

[image]

"Sleek along and brings you roses
He's always got the words to say
Just enough, so you don't notice.
That you ain't nothing but his prey"
-
|*The Devil is a Gentleman*|

»»————- ♔ ————-««

It's been seven days. Already a week since she settled into this palace, she found nothing but enemies at her every door.

This week, she was cautious. She didn't hesitated to test food before she ate, she rarely went out of her room, always on her toes, never causing too much trouble.

Although, she knew she could not escape forever. Eventually, the assassin would find a way to get to her, should it be Prussia himself or some person.

She didn't know who the killer was, which made things more difficult. There were no clues, no hints about who they might be. Her prime suspect was obviously Prussia, but he accepted to this marriage, instead of immediately trying to kill her. There must be something in it for him too that she didn't know yet, hopefully, she would before it is too late.

She couldn't trust anyone in here, as far as she knows they could be trying to murder her, putting up a fake smile just to let her get slightly comfortable. If only she had more resources, she could try anything else, but in here, she was naked of any possessions.

Her eyes ventured at the date in her notebook, sighing profoundly. Her fingers touched the margin and she recollected her thoughts.

Today she would need to get out, to meet the Kaiser's chancellor to state her formal information before the wedding. It was no surprise that she wasn't taken seriously, since the wedding was a week away and they still didn't know what her name was.

Luckily, the chancellor still resided within palace walls, so no big assassination could be tried outside, giving them the chance to call it 'a tragic accident'. She would still need to watch out for any suspicious objects. She was not losing her life one week away from the event that would guarantee her the goal she had in mind. She had to save them.

She pushed dryly on the front cover of her notebook to close it and she turned the key in the tiny lock that hanged to it. Then, she set on the notebook the edge of a needle, right where it was about to fall, she sighed when it didn't move anymore.

She heard the bell the priest shook in the courtyard of the palace. It was the hour that was set for her to meet the chancellor. She hoped she could come on some other time, since the assassin knew perfectly her time table, because it was openly shared by the kaiser to everyone in the palace. Kudos for him. She couldn't come later or earlier, since she couldn't let the people have a reason to throw her out.

It was a trapping situation, but if she played careful, maybe she wouldn't have to suffer any consequences.

She pushed on her heel and reached out for the light coat that was dropping down the chair. She pulled on the collar of the coat and she pushed her hands through the sleeves, before pushing down the fabric so it was straightened.

She bit her cheek since she knew she was unprotected. Women did not use to have purses in this time, since it was introduced later, which made it difficult for her to carry around a knife, when you're all dolled up and presented like a princess about to marry the next big shot.

She couldn't stay in here anymore, the longer she waited, the more time she gave the assassin to prepare.

She took the papers about her information and she pushed them under her arm, finally going to the chancellor. Her steps were careful as she stopped before every possible opening. She decided to take the road with the most of people. A murder can't happen if there's plenty of people and even if it did happen, people were forced to help her, as the soon-to-be wife of their king.

She had a calm demeanor, but her hands were out in case she needed to defend herself.

It was safe to say that she reached the chancellor's office with no problems. Nothing suspicious, no obstacles. Before entering the room, she made sure that she did not have anything on her, nothing in her pockets. Everything was good.

She knew she couldn't keep out of here for too long, so she knocked at the chancellor's door and entered it as soon as she was allowed to.

»»——♔ |*After the meeting with the chancellor*| ♔ ————-««

What a damn bastard.

Kingdom of Prussia did not hesitate in appointing her to a two-faced gold-digger. This man asked her how many estates she owned after she said that she was not of noble descent. The worst part was how he kept a neutral face even after he did ask her that.

She bit her lip as she remembered how the meeting went. She did not lie about most of the information. She gave her real name, her age, but she lied about some minor things that she knew that would prohibit her from ever setting place in this castle again.

She remembered to not sign, since she was a woman, but she would love to just write that damn document herself to make him look stupid. As if she needed him, ha. She cringed when she remembered how boring this was. To speed the whole thing, she had to make it look as if she actually liked the man. She would love to fire this

donkey as soon as she becomes queen. She'll make a damn decree about firing this kind of guys if she has to.

In conclusion, she blamed Prussia for this whole unnecessary interaction. He knew what he was doing, that prick. He thinks he can make her act out? He'll need to wait a while if he thinks he can.

She would storm out of that office, if a thing was not thrown across the corridor before her onto the floor. She immediately froze up and got into position. The assassin. It had to be him.

She looked around and saw nobody, so she carefully approached the object that was thrown across the corridor. She crawled carefully, she knew that landmines where still not a thing at this time, so she could safely go through the floor.

As soon as she got to the object, she saw a small sparrow, with a message tied around it. It was more what was left of the sparrow, since the poor bird had a hole through it's wing. It was shot.

She took no pleasure in taking the rests of the bird and untying the message around it. Then, she pushed the paper open with her finger and she read the message:

'Rule 2 • A Golden Cage Is Still A Cage. You already fell in the trap, since you are reading this'

Then, as soon as she stopped reading, she figured she shouldn't stand up. Not now. Her eyes moved to the bird, to its small lifeless body and she looked guilty. Guilty of what was going to happen.

She took the bird and she put her coat around it. Suddenly, she threw it in the air, right above herself and she ducked to the ground.

She was right to do so, since soon bullets went through the window that was closed before.

She noticed the window was slightly opened when she inspected her surroundings. Just enough for a potzdam flintlock infantry musket to fit in the opening. She was in the floor, so she could play it well by making the assassin think she got up, throwing the bird

up with her coat. It made a quick replica, letting her escape. She gulped when she saw her coat with bullet holes around with the bird, shot right into the head. It was scary how precise the shot was.

She grabbed the coat and she dragged it with her. For the rest of the way, she crawled not daring to get up in any window.

Soon, she went inside the part of the palace where windows were not available. She got against the wall and huffed. That was a close one. Her thoughts didn't fail to revolve around her head as she hugged the message that cost her a sparrow's life and almost, hers.

...She really hates assassins.

After calming her mind down, she took on a new way. She was going to Prussia. This small interaction could either clear his name or make him even more suspicious.

Either way, the assassin was not a common thug payed. The message the person left, it had a double meaning.

'Rule 2 • A Golden Cage Is Still A Cage. You already fell in the trap, since you are reading this'

He stated that she was already trapped. From the message, she could also understand that the assassination attempt was going to happen soon.

But it had a second meaning. She read it again and she gulped, groaning in frustration. Why did she fall for this trick?

The second way to understand this was that she fell into the trap, because she read that. Of course, peasant girls were not supposed to be able to read in 1792.

She showed the ability to read when she showed the message to Prussia, telling him exactly what it said. She set her own trap down. This created suspicion and one more reason to get rid of her.

The assassin knew perfectly what to do. He was showing her what he could do. He was not dumb.

However, this small breakdown did not last long, she quickly regained her composure and made her way to Prussia's office again. If they wanted her to play this game, she would. She would play the dumb prey. This way, she could survive the monsters in this palace.

Just one more week before the wedding. That was what kingdom of Prussia did wrong. His pride was hit by marrying an unknown girl, so he tried to pressure the marriage. However, this gave the assassin less time to finish her. She predicted that only one more attempt would happen before the wedding.

After a while of walking, she stood before the office of Kingdom of Prussia. Her fiancé. He did say to come to her once something like this happened, so she decided to play with his rules for now.

Before she could knock, a man stopped her - "May I ask your business with the Kaiser?" - he crossed her way with a hand to her face.

She scoffed and honestly couldn't hold back a bit of anger out, because of the stress of almost being killed for a second time.

She breathed and she replied as gently as she could - "Can't I see my fiancé, his majesty? I have matters to discuss with his excellence."

The man did not show compassion as he declared - "Does her lady have anything to hand to his grace, while I ask his majesty's opinion on your visite?" - he looked at her sharply, with an unforgiving stare.

Alright, this guy was another of those status freaks. She smiled at him and held out the message in front of her - "Please transmit this to his excellence... And I plead you to tell him that 'it happened again' and that I would *really* appreciate to speak with him, if he would be considerate enough to gift me some of his time." - She bit the inside of her cheek as she kept the most compliant posture she had.

His excellence really had a habit of recruiting assholes.

The man took the message not glancing at it and turned around - "I

will speak to his majesty." - He walked inside the room, letting her glance one second, as she saw Prussia holding his head while writing, then lifting his eyes to also look at the opening door *and her*.

She caught his image in few moments ; his black hair was pushed back with his hand, while his pale skin made him look pure, just like an angel. She could see his wine purple eyes, with dark circles around them, accentuating his face. He was in his habitual clothes, this time wearing a leather brown shoulder pad. His strong posture made it look even more intimidating as he glanced at her with his usual annoyed look. There was no denying it, he was a real beauty.

Then, the man closed the door and she could not see him anymore.

»»——♔ |*After the man closed the door*| ♔————-««

Prussia snickered.

He was absolutely aware of what happened behind that door. He could hear them easily due to the design he built with this palace. He knew she wanted to see him and the assassin has probably hit back.

Which is the reason why he didn't let her in. He would go crazy if that woman started complaining again and questioning him. It was an easy job to just kill her off, which is why he set an assassin to do that. Except he didn't expect the assassin to do his job so poorly.

He knew who the assassin was from the way he was playing it out, and that annoyed him. Why can't they hire someone else but him? It was too late and now he had to brace himself with the consequences if any word got out of his secret, the assassination, or the assassin.

He then feigned ignorance when his courtier got closer. He inquired with a flat tone - "Ulrich, is there a matter I need to attend to?" - he pushed his eyes up to look at the man who stood at a distance.

Ulrich kneeled down on one knee and stated - "Your majesty, it is none other but the girl you call your fiancée." - Prussia tilted his

head slowly and hummed.

He loved these fools. The lack of respect they showed sometimes was mortifying ; for his laugh, of course.

Prussia then continued, his flat tone still present - "What is it that the woman wants?" - He knew exactly what she wanted and asking him was just useless, but hearing it could still be interesting.

The courtier held out the message she conveyed him earlier and he announced - "Your grace, she seeks your time and for you to know that 'it happened again'. She also brought this message with her, to make you consider."

Prussia then scoffed silently and got up from his seat. He marched around the desk and he took the message from his courtier. He looked at it and just as he suspected, the crest was there.

He quickly read what it said and rolled his eyes, he threw the message on his desk and came back to his seat, sitting carelessly, his feet covered with his black loafers, on the table.

This is why he hires arrogant, loud-mouths. Since his reputation can't be moved from their stupid, overconfident words, he keeps them around. He didn't miss the latest gossip where he is considered a patient man. Either way, nothing gets around him.

He didn't consider the courtier that was still kneeling before his desk and the woman, that was standing outside the door. He looked back at his papers without giving an answer.

He was, in fact, finding out about her. How so? He collected some time ago the papers his chancellor got from her, for the marriage claims. His fingers skimmed through the well-written pages.

- "Y.N L.N, mm? Uncommon name."

He skimmed through a few pages more and read it patiently. His mouth sometimes turning into a smirk from the ridicule - "Enjoys planning... lived in (Y.C)... Who does she think she is?" - He let out his usual deep laugh. Did she actually think they cared? He would love to be there when the chancellor asked her those unnecessary

questions, knowing she couldn't refuse but to reply.

Finally, his eyes moved to the upwards part of the page as he read, grinning slightly - "So she's not that much younger. Only five years? She's lucky." - He hummed and thought out-loud - "Right on the child-bearing age... That may be an advantage."

He then looked down to see that his courtier, Ulrich, was still kneeling. He casually said his name - "Ulrich."

The man cowered in his spot and immediately answered - "Yes, your elegance?"

- "Tell her that..."

»»——♔ |*A while later, outside the door*| ♔————-««

She was still standing outside, waiting to be let in. If she was not smarter, she would swear that he was trying to wait for the assassin to kill her while they are in the office.

When she heard the door being opened, she raised her head and smiled. She asked with all her dignity - "May I enter then?" - She waited for the courtier to get out.

But while the door was open, she could see Prussia not facing her, but with his back to her face, gazing out of the window. She perceived his strong back and his hands crossed behind his hand. She could see how tightly he held his hand, his fingers probably rough and strong.

The show ended when the courtier closed the door instead of letting her in.

- "You cannot. His majesty is immensely busy and he cannot attend you now. Although, he considered your issue and he gave me his answers." - replied the man, speaking highly.

She gritted her teeth. Damn Prussian dog. He perfectly knew how annoying and disrespectful this was. She did try to get the most of the man in front by smiling - "That is such a pity. May I know what he said?"

The man looked up as if he was dealing with the most difficult job in this palace and he explained - "His grace wanted you to know that you should report to him if there's a next time. He also wanted me to transmit you this remark."

She dropped her smile. All this time and he tells her just this? He really must enjoy riling her up. She asked him with an uncaring voice - "What is it?"

The courtier did not hide his small smirk when he stated, repeating word by word - "Miss, it seems you were in trouble. I convert all my prayers into hope that it won't happen again. Let me just add, a queen does not walk around with a dirty and muddy dress, where the knees are."

She needed to strangle the man. Not the courtier, Kingdom of Prussia himself. All this time just for pretty words of hope and then lowering her by commenting on her current looks? She would rather have her dress dirty where the knees are, than being dead, and she's pretty sure she's not the only one.

She walked away, not even bidding adieu to the infuriating man in front of her. Although, she knew one thing. He was not the assassin. He probably recruited the assassin, but he was not. Why? She checked the room and the floor, and there is no way he could have ran all the way here like a fool, just to make it look he's a dignified king. No, he wouldn't.

She could always check. After walking for a while around the palace, she stormed through the door of her own room, closing it behind. She looked at everything and she sighed when nothing was moved. It seems the assassin gave up on an attempt today. However, she returned to her notebook.

She grinned triumphantly when she saw that the needle that layed vertically on the notebook, was set like before, but this time, it was under the lock. The assassin checked her notebook.

Bingo.

»»————- ♔Wo Ist♔ ————-««

»»————- ♔ Mein Ende ♔ ————-««

"Stay tuned, he is alone in this world. . ."

Drawing is mine.

3276 words

[image]

Chapter 7|Volatile Stride

"Words like violence
Break the silence
Come crashing in
Into my little world
Painful to me
Pierce right through me
Can't you understand?
Oh, my little girl"
-
|Enjoy The Silence|

»»————- ♔ ————-««

Tap. Tap. Tap.

That was the sound of her shoes hitting the marble floor. She kept a strong stride, different from the one she had until now, cowering before the mysterious assassin and speeding up every time she thought she heard something.

She turned on her heel and sped towards the greenhouse hall. She needed to get there before the killer makes his next move.

She knew that Prussia wouldn't help her unless she won this battle. His pride wouldn't allow him to.

She passed the stainless floor, her heels a high contrast to poverty. She pulled up her dress to not trip on it, as she continued her fast walk.

Meanwhile, the person who attempted murder on her two times, also moved consistently towards the greenhouse.

His steps were heavy, his black shoes flattening any imperfection on his passage. A sound of metal scraped the floor as he dragged his axe behind in his hand.

He wore a grey and black hood that covered most of his face. Only his eyes were visible. His red bloody eyes.

He was close to where she was, barely meters from the greenhouse hall; and its dead end. He could smell her perfume in the air, his steps quickening as he got closer. His job would be done fast and neatly. No mistake would be done, just like always.

He could hear her heels echoing through the hallway, his goal only a palm away. She was in a dead end, having only the glass of the window with a view to the greenhouse. He gripped the axe and jumped the last steps, before jumping with the axe before him. The blade cut through the marble with a loud thud.

Nothing before him. Where was she?

He dragged the axe as he looked towards the window she was supposed to be at. She wrote she would be right here, looking at the flowers, in the garden where Prussian Kingdom would take his evening tea... But today is Friday.

- "I will be patiently waiting for his arrival, to present my reasons to him." - she finished the exact words she wrote - "Got ya."

The assassin recognized the voice behind him, it was her. He turned around slowly to face her, he hadn't muttered a word as he held his executing stare. She was only two steps away from him. Right an arm's length.

He passed his hand to the hilt of the axe and gripped it before raising it. She was immobile, making it easier for him. Too easy. He raised it and struck aiming for her uncovered neck, almost asking for it to be pierced. He could almost feel the blood dripping down his hands and shoes.

- "You wouldn't do that" - she voiced, with an amused tone. As soon as she started talking, he stopped his blade right above her skin. He held it there, weighing on his grip, the possibility of him dropping it and killing her still very present.

Although, he looked at her, right in the eye. His red eyes were two

rubies, a huge beauty in the company of lingering death. His mask covered his face enough to see only his pupils. He was leaning over her, his height making him more intimidating. He asked with a quiet, rough voice - "Why not?" - His voice was alluring, attracting her towards the danger that he is.

She shook it off, already immune to men's betraying words and aspects. She added confidently, as a stating matter-of-fact - "You told me the rules, so you want me to play."

He glanced at her, still refusing to believe he had no effect on her. He gave up after some time and hummed. He raised the axe away from her and pushed it to his side.

She took a big breath, glad that she was safe, despite her words from before. She still stood her ground, staring at him, defying him with her mere presence. Alive presence.

He took a step back and glanced at her in silence.

He pushed his axe so it rested on his shoulder, his expression still mysterious. He stood before her and nodded.

She watched him step before, passing next to her, walking away with the axe still recumbent on his firm shoulder. He stopped for a moment to state with his grave voice - "Well done." - over his shoulder. He then resumed his walk and continued to hit the stone as he did before.

She couldn't believe she just managed to get this assassin away from her. It's over, she was safe. She laughed still slightly trembling from the interaction - "Ha ha... Not much of a talker is he..?"- she added sarcastically.

She looked down and noticed a message, like the ones he placed next to his assassination attempts. She knew this was not the only reason he wanted her alive. If it was, she would probably be dead. There is something else she still has to find out.

She looked at it with a grudge, really hoping it was not another assassination disguised as a truce. She took the careful approach

and quickly grabbed the paper, just in case he was to throw a knife at her.

When she held it and stepped away, nothing happened. She sighed and analysed the document in her hand. She flipped it in her hand and pushed her eyes to the handwriting in ink.

'Happy Wedding.' was written on the sole sheet of paper. The sign that Prussian Kingdom described as the 'Crest' was also there. She smiled realising she finally could sleep with no worries. No big worries at least.

Of course, there was Prussia that still wanted her dead. What was strange is that he didn't really try anything, except assigning one assassin. She would need to investigate when she could.

Speaking about the devil, she should talk to him.

She pushed the paper in her bra, having no other place where to place it. She began her new stride.

She passed the corridors in a dignified manner, her hands holding up the skirt of the dress. She passed doors and doors, the place seemingly infinite.

She knew that if she tried visiting him tomorrow in his office, he would ignore her like the last time and offend her. Especially since there were few days left for the wedding.

She couldn't try the meeting room, since she'd prove his men's point about her being a desperate princess in need of rescue.

Last option? His own private rooms. She will regret it later, but she'll worry about that later. There are things that just can't wait and time is running.

She put her hand on the wall and peeked around the corner leading to the corridor where two columns and a golden door with carved angels led to the entrance of his quarters. She furrowed her eyebrows when she noticed the two life guards before the door. There was no way she would be let through.

Time to use her brain. After a second of reflection, she concluded her plan. She grabbed her pouch of coins and threw them on the other side of her corridor.

The guards immediately noticed the sound, but didn't move, to protect their king. She threw the coins further and further away from there. She knew they were suspicious and she used that to throw one last coin the furthest away on a vase.

The vase, like their suspicions, shattered in one instant. One of the guards marched towards the corridor with the broken vase, weapon high. The other was still on guard.

She had to get the other away too. Thankfully, she heard the echo of this hall and she knew she could use this. She got behind a door of an empty guest room and she screamed. Before that, she threw a coin before the guard, from the other side of the corridor where she was.

The guard looked at both his sides and he concluded that she was on the other side of the corridor, due to the misleading echo and the coin. He saw that his companion was not here and he decided to check it quickly.

That was all she needed. She walked quickly, but quietly to his door and pushed the doorknob open. Locked. *Damn it!* This was an inconvenience, even more since the guard would return any minute now. She heard the steps of the men, meaning they were returning to their post. She had fortunately predicted this.

Seconds later, both guards returned and saw that nothing was there. They grabbed the coins and showed them to each other in silence. They assumed a servant got drunk and began throwing coins everywhere.

They checked the door of their Kaiser. It was still locked and the lock was not forced. They didn't think much of it and preferred to keep quiet about this affair, since they left their spots. Nothing was wrong, why should they worry?

Meanwhile, she hid behind the bed of the neighbouring room,

hoping they wouldn't check inside. This room was a spare room next to the king's one, for important guests. There is no interest in this room, since it has no way into the king's quarters.

However, she thought of a breach. It was no mistake that Prussia had this whole corridor blocked out only for him and guards looking for every person that passed here. She watched the outside of the interior gardens and she noticed; the balconies are close.

Of course, he would never tell that to his soldiers, the real reason why they would guard an empty corridor if there are already guards in every part of the castle. He was way too smart for that.

Once she knew they settled and considered it as nothing, she opened the doors to the balcony in total silence, to not get discovered. She closed it like it was before, to avoid suspicion.

She watched how his big balcony hung slightly higher than hers. It was no obstacle for her. She got on the railing and didn't look down. She wouldn't like to know the what ifs.

She then jumped and gripped a column of the Prussia's balcony, slipping in between the gap.

Was she there? She was there. She huffed, glad that she succeeded. She collected a breath and looked at his balcony's open door.

This is no mistake, she noticed how he always kept his balcony open when he was awake.

She hesitantly stepped in and prepared herself for any defensive act of any sort.

-"What are you doing here?"

She turned around the room to find Prussia observing her from the side. She went mute and took a step back. She looked for words to say, but seeing the gorgeous man, staring at her from above, a light curious look to her misleading actions, she forgot the ability to speak. He was leaning against a column of the bed, his eyes showing the obvious groggy state he was currently in. Something about him was bewitchingly attractive, yet distant.

-"I asked you a question, this is the part where you reply."

She knew she had to, but her inability to formulate one word was infuriating. He wore his usual black silk pants, with his belt around it. But his vest with his golden epaulettes was gone. In fact, his shirt was too. He was standing before her half-dressed, like the devil he is.

She regretted intruding his private space, because now she couldn't tear her view off his lean musculature and all his bewitching features he had hid under his clothes. The worst of all, he still looked beautiful as handsome and indecent he looked.

She pushed all her possible stuttering aside and replied quietly- "It isn't what you think it is, let me explain..."

He cut her off with one move of his hand, now bare of his gloves. She trailed off and her eyes followed as he strolled down to his desk, passing his hands on the glass of wine he had left on the table. He leaned back on it, passing the red fluid on his lips.

Why couldn't she speak? Was it because she was mesmerized by the simple beauty he showed, or because he looked so nonchalant, so uncaring about the crime she had committed just this second? She had many questions, but it was unfair to ask them in her position.

He set his glass and waved his hand towards her, while leaning back on the table, his eyes trailing up her clothes. - "You climbed a balcony." - he said with a quiet, wondering tone.

She lifted her head and avoided his figure to respond - "...Yes." - she glanced at his breathtaking purple eyes, feeling as any breaking of eye contact would kill her, as if she was his prey alone.

He acknowledged it with a nod and continued with his ponderous questioning, not missing to wave at her frivolous appearance - "In a dress?" - he finished with a hushed tone.

She nodded again, feeling as if this questioning had a deeper meaning behind it all. It didn't stop her from being uncomfortable for some reason, or at least unrestful.

He stood straight, picking up his glass with carmine wine and he grinned - "You are crazy. Absolutely out of your mind." - he stepped towards her and stopped when he was just before her. She didn't fail to take a step back, to recover some space.

She put her hands forward to stop him from getting closer. She raised her eyes to stare at him, straight through what she hopes is his soul and stated with a tone that was a bit too nervous for her liking - "I found your killer."

He interrupted his stride to tilt his head. He didn't show any special emotion to this new piece of information as he chuckled sweetly. Too sweetly for a man of his type.

The man pushed her against the column and pressed a sharp dagger to her throat. With his other hand he gripped both of her wrists and he restrained them.

She was forced into a still position, his strength taking her by surprise and preventing her from seeing it come. She didn't even see him.

Although, once she raised her head to study her aggressor, she didn't miss the sangria eyes preying on her, compelling her to this fate.

She was surprised; he seemed so calm. The monstrous intentions of that man just showed themselves after he broke his peaceful demeanor.

She could feel the danger oozing out of that man. It was bittersweet, like the wine that flowed down his throat minutes ago.

He was staring down at her, hoping *every bit of her* perished in deep agony, feeling every part of her body suffer and bleed out as she hoped for a childish dream that she ever had the upper hand. He had to stop himself to not just slash her throat, let her bleed out in *dull blood* and *dirty tears* and walk out, solving this annoyance for once and all. Except, he was still above her, why worry about pests?

She found a soft smirk on his features as he whispered almost too

kindly - "Did you kill him?" - He asked as he almost caressed her aorta with his knife. He imposed his will, and he was making it clear he demanded the answer.

She tried to keep her composure as she replied with a question - "Why would I-?" - He cut her off instantly having no patience to deal with any of her idiotic antics. He wanted to know the answer, at that instant.

"**Woman.**" - he replied shortly, his voice a low tone, gravelly in its depth. He wanted nothing but to know the answer to his heavy question. Her answer would be what either saved her or condemned her. He would personally have no issue sentencing her.

"*Calm down.* Of course I didn't." - she confessed, hurriedly. She had to be careful if she was to achieve her goal. This whole action depended on his moody aristocratic frame of mind.

He let the dagger fall to his side. He also released her wrists he held in his hand. He turned the knife swiftly between his elegant bare fingers and he sheathed it, before throwing the weapon carelessly on the coffee table.

"Good." - That was the only short answer he offered her, after his death threat. He crossed his arms behind his back and looked at her, unimpressed.

She looked at him incredulously, was he hoping she killed him or not? That man was incomprehensible. If she was not in that tight spot of being currently in his *spoiled paws*, she would speak her mind clearly.

He raised his eyebrow. What? She didn't say that out loud. Proud Prussian eagle.

He contemplated the silence and he deemed it annoying - "You didn't kill him and you still came here. Let me guess, you'll try to threaten me asking me to give you something in exchange for your silence. Was that what you wanted?" - As much as he gives her freedom to do whatever she wishes with the condition of giving him what he wanted in the end, he pushes her to reveal what she is

pursuing.

It is amusing that she thinks she'll achieve her goal, but he still didn't like to be kept out of something. He is not just anyone, he is the Kaiser.

He's the one who paints the cities with blood and glory, the one who decides who lives and who dies under his iron fist. He's above any low mortal he rules and there is no higher person than him, but God.

She is a mere inconvenience that can turn into profit for him. The heavens heard his prayers. Thanks to her, he would finally have everything.

If only he could predict the answer he received from her after his question - "What? No. I came here for answers. I thought you'd realize I am trying to marry you, not have the stupid idea of trying to frame you. Who would even try that? You're the man on top here, you can't be sentenced for that, who would even try to do that?" - She glanced at him with confusion. She crossed her arms and looked up at him, hoping he'd explain his reasoning.

She was more worried about his reasoning than her situation. He glared at her since now he owed her an unnecessary explanation. Who does she think she is compared to him? Also, who is she calling a mere *man*?

"Woman, you didn't come here for lone answers. *No sane* human would jump balconies like that just to get answers." - he gritted his teeth. Did she think she was being smart? What a dumb girl. He looked down at her small face which he wanted to punch easily - "I hope you know there is a great invention humanity named a door."

She laughed with challenge in her voice - "You think I wouldn't use the door if you didn't have guards and useless councilors guarding it for you? I'm not stupid, you don't want to see me. Guess what? You don't have a choice." - She sat her ground and waited until he replied. This man got on her nerves so easily. Why couldn't he just let her do what she wanted?

At first, he was just annoyed. He let her think she's superior, let her play her ground. Oh, he's regretting it so much. How much would her death cost to her family? He wouldn't need to pay anything if he killed the family too. *Bon marché.*

There was no denying it, he was mad. He wanted her outside and out of his view. Out of his palace if it was possible. Pity that ants can't be just stepped on before they died. He needed to find the perfect angle, the perfect situation to make the death as satisfying as possible.

"What are your questions?" - he replied as calmly as possible. This bitch woman wouldn't be the one who got the best of him. He was dignified, divine and grand in every sense. She is a commoner. Nothing more.

"Why did you send an assassin?" - she asked, as she wandered through the room, to sit on his king-sized bed. She crossed her legs and glared at him elegantly in her expensive clothes.

He leaned against his desk and traced his finger on the glass of wine, as he cast his eyes on her. He was debating if he should make her regret ever getting close to the place where he slept or not. He had a feeling his revenge would be sweet like a cube made of sugar.

At that moment, he finally replied to her - "Why not? You think that me, the Kaiser, would just accept a peasant to propose to me and marry me because she knows my secret? You are either very confident or extremely, exceedingly, tremendously stupid."

She sighed and rolled her eyes - "I thought I proved you already that I am not just a dumb peasant but I indeed have a brain." - dealing with men was not on her Industrial Revolution card.

He groaned and moved his wrist in circles, asking her to continue faster - "Woman, please tell me in what part of this conversation do I care?" - if she was going to be annoying then why should he hold back? No more being a nice King when she literally got inside his room when he was fine on his own.

She wanted to take her fist and kindly pass it through his handsome

face so it got some new holes. She knew this was a game of willingness and none of them was willing to lose.

"Let me rephrase that. Why did you send an assassin when you could have done it yourself? You didn't even know who the assassin was!" - she was missing a piece of information and everything was confusing because of it.

He raised an eyebrow - "I thought you'd figure out why since you know my secret. I cannot fight." - He can't fight? What? Instead of thinking, she nodded and pressured him to answer the other question.

"Yes, yes, you're right, but what about my other question?" - he was about to retort something when she cut him off with the palm of her hand. - "Don't start talking nonsense, I know you don't choose anyone to do your dirty work. So why did you get worried when you saw the signs he left behind? Is the assassin someone you know?"

The King looked at her incredulous. He chuckled lowly, mocking her - "You're telling me you didn't even discover his identity? I expected more of you. Nevermind, you're just a peasant who's not telling me everything."

She got between his lines - "Just answer. Why does it matter to you if-"

He cut her off with his deep voice - "Woman. If you want to get somewhere you need to offer a fair trade. Right now, you're giving me nothing to work with. Please do try at least." - he sounded exasperated.

Although, for the first time, he sounded genuine. Was he trying to help her? Impossible. He literally sent an assassin behind her.

He was leaning against his desk, head pulled back, bored out of his mind. She was not benefiting him. How long before he should call the guards inside so they take her fiancée far away from him? Maybe a trip to the Russian Empire.

He watched how he involuntarily flexed his body, his annoyed face in this relaxed position, with this face. He resembled a live painting.

"I understand. So you didn't even try to kill me. It was just your pride who made you attempt this." - she scoffed and laughed at him - "And in the end, you even got the worst of it!" - she didn't finish her mocking, even when he was already smiling with a killing glare. She decided to just add wood to the fire - "What an unsuccessful coward!"

He let her laugh, while he stared at her in silence. Once she finished laughing, he asked - "I deem he left a message?" - At that moment, he came up to her and he smiled.

Oh, that smile. She would remember it her whole life. It left her shivering, from fear. It was an ambitious smile, with dark intentions.

He reached for her and with a slight push from his part, he revealed his huge strength, he pushed her throat against the bed. It was not even strong and she immediately fell backwards. He then pushed his hand to her collar and he reached right on the limit of the dress' V neckline.

She became scarlet red when she realised where he had just layed his fingers. Although, he ignored it.

He knew what he had just done. He didn't want to come to such heights, but he had to remind her of her place and the future she was asking for, marrying him. But it felt good to keep her finally silent. He backed off and left her laying on his bed, as she looked paralyzed.

Meanwhile, he opened the small note and hummed. He replied mundanely - "So he's wishing for the marriage? That's news." - his voice was convicted of thousands of broken hearts. And yet, hers was pounding, like drops of heavy rain.

He hummed and closed the paper. She tried to insult him, but he was faster than her. He sauntered towards his chair and he pulled on his shirt and many ceremonial insignias and medals, his golden

epaulettes moving with his every ministration. He pulled on his spiky black shoes and he crossed his arms behind his back as he walked to the door.

"I will visit our dear assassin. Seems like you made it, woman. I will marry you tomorrow. Do not worry about escaping, I will take care of the guards so you may exit peacefully. I do not want to see you here when I return." - He passed his hand on the golden doorknob and turned to her messy form on his bed - "Also, *my dear*, I am no coward, but one of the rascals you will regret to have met."

He shut the door behind him and the guards walked away with him. She sat up the bed and noticed a small painting of a woman on his desk, which he touched before leaving her here. She got closer and she inspected it. It was her. His dead wife.

»»————- ♔Wo Ist♔ ————-««
»»————-♔Mein Ende♔————-««

"Stay tuned, he is against life. . ."

4465 words

Chapter 8|Shared Shrine

[image]

'You know what we say
"Be close to your dearest friends"
But also
"Even closer to your opponents"
But my best enemy, it's you,
Flee me, the worst, it's me and you.'

|Ma Meilleure Enemie|

»»----- ♔ -----««

She looked almost beautiful.

The woman looked at her reflection in the mirror, gawking the accessories in her hair, as well as the pearls around her wrist. She couldn't help tracing the pearly bracelet with her fingertips, the smooth stone soothing her nerves.

What a normal day to get wed to a heartless king.

She let out an incredulous chuckle. If only the world was a little easier on her, she wouldn't have to go to these lengths. So much for that.

Her dress was composed of a corset that detailed her chest and waist. She couldn't choose if she felt more suffocated with the dress, or with *him*. She was not ignorant of the way people tremble when his name is spoken. As if your sentence was above your head, waiting for you to trip to crush you to dust.

Her hand was slapped away when she tried to reach for the decorations in her hair. The head maid spoke no words to her as she continued to arrange her looks. That's right, she was mere dust to the king to step on with his spotless sole.

However, she could not forget her goal. *Veni, vidi, vici.*

She would not let some idiots from the past surpass her. Even if she had to crush the king himself, she won't be surprised.

- "Her Lady is sublime. His Majesty will not take his eyes off her."

She glanced at the mirror to observe from the corner of her eye the maid who was fixing the folds of her dress. She moved her eyes to her wrist to notice quickly an emblem.

'Noble lineage.'

She diverted her eyes from her when the young maid looked up at her. She wondered why the Prussian bastard even got her someone so above her class to tend to her. It was unnatural of him. She dropped her eyes to the young woman checking the silk of her dress. Despite all, she could be valuable. - "What is your name, madam?" - she stated.

- "My parents gave me the name of Cassandra. Cassandra von Haken bows to Her Lady." - she showed her deepest respects with a bow that let the other woman observe her mannerisms.

- "Cassandra? I presume as in the Trojan princess?" - she smiled calmly to let the other woman let out the tension she had.

The younger nodded and explained excitedly - "Yes! Her Lady is very cultivated. No wonder the Kaiser chose her." - Hook, line and sinker. It's curious how it takes so little to get people to open up. Just a little compliment and their mouth is already running.

She kept on her smile and inquired, softly - "Oh, how nervous I am. My wedding with the Kaiser himself...! What is to happen with me..." - She looked down, seeming worried, when the maid took her hands and comforted her.

- "Her Lady has not to worry! The wedding was prepared by the most important merchants and craftsmen on this land. It will be a wedding like no other." - she assured her kindly, careful to not agitate the future queen, as it could act poorly on her nerves.

- "Oh, my Cassandra... My dear Cassandra... could I ask something to calm my nerves?" - she didn't know how long she could keep up with this act before the maid noticed anything.

The head maid was staring at both of them on the other side of the room, with a suspicious glare. This was her sign to not keep this longer, along with this sentence - "Oh, of course Her Lady may ask. Ask away, please."

- "What do you know about her Majesty, the late queen?" - she asked away hurried, before diluting the serious question with another pretext that the young girl could not discern - "I don't want to offend his Majesty by touching his honour in his past affairs, you see..."

Cassandra bit the bait and began to explain - "I understand Her Lady. She must not be concerned about the late queen. It is true, her late Majesty was not only a beloved queen, but she also remained close to His Majesty, the Kaiser."

- "Close to the Kaiser himself? She must have been formidable." - said the unmarried woman, a lingering tone of curiosity at the end of her sentence. She covered the late woman in compliments, hiding her intentions perfectly from the young ecstatic von Haken.

- "She was, her late Majesty was excellent. There was not a day where His Majesty would not greet her- Of course, you mustn't worry, Her Lady has charmed His Majesty equally and I believe he has only regards for Her Lady." - she assured her quickly, smiling at her kindly, straightening the folds of the dress on her hip.

- "So her late Majesty was important to him..." - she thought to herself.

The maid bit her lip, feeling as if she just worsened the situation. She had only preoccupied her future queen with unnecessary comments about the late queen. She then voiced her final thought out loud - "Her Lady has not to worry, her late queen had that terrible accident at the end of her life, so His Majesty would not even think abou-"

The two large doors were opened with a slam, interrupting the maid. The woman, the head maid and the younger maid looked at the commotion at the doors of the dressing room.

Two guards stormed in and held the doors open, before lowering theirs heads at the man that marched in calmly after.

His stance was decisive, despite his easy walk. Although, even poorly shrewd folk could notice that behind the walk was a firm command of dominance. A quiet tidal wave, eliminating everything on its path. His shining black boots toppled down the thoughts of the people inside the chamber. He left no spot of the room without his undeniable presence.

And his eyes. His tyrian purple eyes tore down any pride, and replaced the space with fear.

The maids bowed down and lowered her heads, paying respects to the one who could bring them prosperity; or death. The woman, with decorations in her hair, gazed through the mirror to take in the man's appearance.

Prussia was staring her down, his eyes funneling the immense hate he was unadvised to show. In his long strides, he quickly reached her side. He stood right behind her, as she still didn't dare to turn to face him.

He had been forced to marry a stranger through a threat, and today was their wedding. She spared one rapid glance to check his irises. She gulped when she saw them already glowering on hers, while his expression remained unreadable. His hand rested on her chair's backrest, only tightening once he remarked her eyes on him.

- "The guests are waiting and you're *still* sitting here. *Must I ask my men to help you leave?*" - said Prussia in a calm, sardonic tone. All his anger and dreadful thoughts were sitting behind those lilac irises.

She moved her eyes to their shared reflection in the mirror, taking in his looks. He was in black straight dress pants that reached to his leather boots. The belt sat tight around his waist. The boots went up to his knees. His higher half was however not... as striking.

He was wearing a casual marine blue shirt, with his sleeves rolled up to his elbows, letting her access to catch sight of his muscled forearms. This time, he was not wearing his gloves, which let her see the calloused skin on his strong hands. Despite the mesmerizing sight, she saved one response - "...Will you marry in your *nightwear*, your majesty?"

The moment he recognized her eyes on him, his two hands grabbed the top rail of the chair, before his body leaned forward, so his mouth was against her ear. He didn't look at her directly, no, he pierced her eyes through the reflection of the mirror instead.

- "Don't run that mouth too much, woman. *I would still slit your throat if I found you not to be of interest*." - he explained coldly. After stating his intentions clearly, he waited some seconds before he stood up straight. The king looked down at her. He found something that irritated his eye, more than usual.

He reached into her hair slowly and pulled out a speck of dirt, which he inspected carefully, before shaking it off on the floor. He smirked coldly at her embarrassed state, and almost spat out when he insulted her charmingly - "*Commoners.*"

Shame caught up to her cheeks as she looked away. He wiped his spotless hand on his navy shirt. She bit back a retort as he left the room with a trace of smugness in his eyes, behind his sealed expression. She whispered to herself once he left the room, with fire - "...I'll make you pay, you *silver-spooned bastard*..-!!.."

»»----- ♔ -----««

The throne room was dressed in white flowers. Cheerful music played in the walls of the guest filled space. The altar was glowing with the sunlight that reached through the stained glass.

The guests were chattering among themselves, as they all stood around the altar. They were all praising the decorations, the food and drinks, as well as the lavish surroundings they were found in.

There were no various guests. Only the nobles who lived in this land could afford to be here. However, their talk alone could fill the

whole room with the main subject, the Kaiser and his commoner bride.

The target of the conversation was standing at the altar. And his stature was as laid-back as firm.

He was like a portrait. Prussia was wearing the same boots and dress pants, but he had his ceremonial white uniform. All his decorations and titles were hanging on his chest. His golden epaulettes moved with his vigorous shoulders motions. The golden buttons trailed up his chest, up to his neck, showing his fit figure.

The guest admired the ruthless man as he gazed down the room with all his coldness. He was feared, but no man was as respected as him. His people were hypnotized by the beauty of their Kaiser. He could be mistaken by one of the stained glasses behind him.

The music changed to a slower one as the doors opened. The guests looked at the door expectantly.

Prussia turned his head to the open door. And at that same second, he saw the woman he's been fighting off, in her blanche dress. Flowers were tucked in her impeccable hair as she walked down the aisle. He turned his stare to her arms, then to her flower crown that adorned her head, with an attached white veil that she dragged behind her. When finally, his eyes rested on her face. *And he frowned.*

As she stepped forward, she felt the stares on her. She was the prize in this ceremony. And most looks were of spite. She took a big breath. After all, it's her big day too.

She walked with her head high, her eyes meeting his.

An exchange of mutual of detest.

Step by step, she got closer to the altar, to this life, to *him*.

He glanced down at her as she walked up the stairs. He felt the eyes of the room on him.

He reached out a hand in void courtesy. When she took it, he

helped her stand on the altar, next to him. They were meant to be bound.

- "Do you, Kaiser, Prussian Kingdom, father of our nation, take Y.N L.N as your bride?"

- "*I do.*"

- "You may exchange rings."

She took his hand and she carefully pushed the ring through his finger. She didn't know however, that he was staring at her all this time, as she did it. He spoke no words, as he analyzed his new bride. Once she finished, it was his turn. She raised her head to look at him.

When she glanced at him, he was observing her ring. He inspected the ring he was supposed to give her with quiet wonder. He turned it in his hand, *as no words spilled through*. He suddenly got out of his trance when he moved his look to her. His wine irises were staring through hers.

Then, he reached for her hand. The moment his hand was on hers, she could feel the calloused skin she observed earlier, as well as a scar on his palm. His rough hands emitted a soft touch when he put the ring on her finger.

Once the deed was done, he moved his gaze away from her as he exclaimed with his proud voice.

- "**The celebrations may begin.**"

They were meant to be bound. And they were meant to break that bond.

»»----- ♔ -----««

She stood in the middle of the ballroom, the place where all the party moved after the vows. Her glass of champagne on her lips. She was left alone, as Prussia went to discuss with the guests.

After the wedding ceremony, he has not spoken out a word to her.

She was constantly questioned by nobles, more local than foreign. She ached to leave this party as soon as possible, so she could plan her next move.

When suddenly, the guests who were spread all throughout the ballroom began to move to the sides of it, she did the same curious as to what was happening. If she guessed what was happening, she was in trouble. The chatter of the nobles quietened and all they heard were the sound of the announcer stepping down to the dance floor, now empty.

Once the man stopped, he cleared his throat and with his loud voice, he spoke out,

- "Gentil men and ladies, we will now begin with the first dance, which the Kaiser will present us with."

The quiet murmurs already took action in the people's mouths. The noble ladies were moving their fans faster, quiet giggles pushing through them. The excitement was clear. The noblemen offered their arm to the ladies they were already keeping an eye on as their partner for the future dance.

She knew she had to step forward. She and the king owned the first dance, which would continue the evening. She was taking her first steps to the center, noticing easily the eyes on her, when a cold voice cut through the air.

- "I refuse."

The tall man with a powerful physique stepped forward to the railing of the tall mezzanine. His black thick disheveled hair shone with the candlelight. His hand gripped the railing like his own sword. He was gorgeous. His dark violet eyes flicked to her smaller person in the middle of the dance floor.

- "I will not be dancing tonight."

Behind him, other noble ladies surrounded him, every and each of them having eyes on the married man. They all sought after a piece of the attractive angel, whom looks could be as tempting as sin.

They kept the minimal respectful distance, but he showed no interest in pushing them away. Instead, he wanted to keep them close to let the world see how puny she is in his eyes. He seemed pleased to tell her from there,

- "And *you* will dance for *me*."

The trumpets rang in the ears of every present noble, the royal order given on the spot. She took a sharp breath to not show the evident stress coming from this new piece of information. She bowed her head in respect to the king.

- "As you wish... *your majesty*."

The band took over quickly, the dance floor clearing for the supposed royal dance... now a one-person dance. No person knew how this would play out, since her majesty the queen has just been humiliated personally.

The band conductor was targeted by the Kaiser's cold eyes, as he started playing the music.

She was alone, on the dance floor, stared at by countless people and the man that could decide her future. Once the music had started, she picked on the notes and she began to move.

She couldn't say her moves were graceful, although, she charmed some faces. She danced alone to a dance where a minimum of two is required.

On one hand, her moves were sloppy, distasteful because of the lack of a partner, on the other hand, the audience was charmed by the commoner women, dancing with a ghost. She opened some of their hearts with pity, while others saw pride far too great to ignore.

Prussia has seen many things from her, and one of the things *he disliked most* about her is her never-ending pride, always challenging him. He was not blind to the awe of the people, to their curious glaze on the courageous woman. And that annoyed him, *for sure*.

He took a moment to turn his head to the woman who has been

commanded to dance for him, all alone on the day of their wedding. He disliked her character, her stubborn words and confident stride and despite that, he couldn't help but follow her with his stare throughout the dance floor.

He could imagine her, *fearful*, the pressure of not slipping up reaching up to her toes, causing her to move, *to dance.* Her dress flowed with her movements, was it because she knew he would be the one pulling the strings of her dress soon? He saw this dance, as a call for freedom, as she swayed towards the fate *he* carved. The man could imagine her tripping away from him, *as he took her hand to lead her to another tango*- He was not charmed like the rest, he was *interested*.

Like this, the man put his second hand on the railing, to grip as he observed the woman who dared to defy him. He would step in, to see how she struggled to find her way once he was in her way, but a hand touched his shoulder.

His head snapped to his left and a man with red eyes and black hair entered his visual field. The man stared back and nodded. Prussia sighed and let go of the railing, just as the song ended.

She was breathless, after having put all her effort in surpassing their expectations. Yet, when she saw that Prussia was gone, before she could see how he looked like after her dance, she frowned. She didn't know what to feel about that, so she tried to forget about it by hearing the crowd applaud her.

As she neared the banquet, she eyed the food and the expensive drinks. She leaned back on the chair, thinking about her next steps. Although, a hand holding a glass of water cut her off her train of thoughts. A deep German accent rolled out of the man holding her a glass of water,

- "Water, your majesty?" - the man had crimson eyes and black hair. He was dressed exquisitely, but still humbly, in black. She nodded, careful from strangers. She put the glass under her nose to check if there were any poisons added. There was no smell to it, so she assumed it was safe.

She put it to her lips and drank the cold fresh water. She wanted to thank the man, but he already left, hiding in the crowd. That's weird. She swore she heard his voice before.

»»----- ♔ -----««

Two maids guided her to a door. Her eyes analyzed the door with carvings on it, the same she was trying to go through some days ago. The women bowed to her and she dismissed them. She passed her hand on the handle to push through.

The royal chambers.

She passed her dainty fingers through the heavy door to finally slip in the dark room. It was just as she remembered, impressive paintings, a glass chandelier hanging on the ceiling, walls decorated with golden paint.

And the bed against the columns.

She looked to her side and the table had no more the painting of Prussia's late wife. He must have taken it somewhere else. The thought of that little painting made her feel something unpleasant. She just can't put her finger on it. She looked to the side, to the balcony.

She felt the cold breeze touch her shoulder, so she moved towards the balcony to close the doors. Her hand grabbed the handle when an imposing figure stepped forward before her, making her stumble slightly.

Prussia had disheveled hair, as he glared at her from above. His sleeves were pulled back, showing his sculptured forearms. His violet irises shone when he pushed her inside, a strong hand on her shoulder. He stepped inside, closing the doors to the balcony with his other hand, not looking back at it, but staring straight at her.

- "Woman." - he said coldly, as they were both left in the quiet darkness, only her breaths heard. The lingering cold air swept under their feet, before it disappeared. She stepped back to regain some space, but he didn't let her and gripped her waist. - "Running

now?"

He seemed unnaturally annoyed, as she observed his whole body. His ceremonial white uniform still felt tight on his figure, as well as the golden epaulettes. - "I am *not* running." - she corrected, her gaze trailing the hand on her waist, stopping her in her tracks.

His head moved down abruptly to growl in her ear - "*Maybe you should have.*" - he grabbed her dress from the front, above her bust, she was shocked and couldn't see as he dragged her through the room to throw her carelessly on the bed. It was the second time now.

She caught her body with her forearms, looking up at the man approaching the bed where she layed. However, this time wasn't a joke.

- "*Wedding night.* A ridiculous name to define the *carnal claim* after the religious vows." - the rough man grunted, not hiding his evident annoyance anymore. He was staring her down as she scrambled on his sheets, the petals in her hair falling onto her throat. He reached down to grab one of them, before crushing it in his fist, disregarding it.

He observed how her white dress clung to her body, an almost fitting sight for what this night had to become. He furrowed his eyebrows, as he saw her picking up her confidence again her gaze. He hated it as much as sweet Hell - "I don't find any importance in your words. I made this decision myself." - she argued, but was cut off by a mocking rough chuckle.

- "I assume the upcoming regret is also yours, woman." - he mocked despite his cold intoxicating gaze. She was going to sit up to fight him back, but his hand pushed her back onto the mattress - "Keep still. Keep fighting and I'll do more than just complete my duty as your *husband*."

She froze the moment she felt his knee pushing his weight on her thigh to keep her legs spread. She looked up to take in his expression and she was almost appalled. His face was nothing but cold, seemingly having no enjoyment from doing this to *her*. He

unfastened the buttons of his tight white ceremonial uniform calmly, having no rush.

He sighed when the suit was open, his chest finally released from the constricted space the ceremonial uniform allowed him to have. He looked back, his shoulders pulled back as he placed his icy look on her.

She adjusted her dress in its place when he let his suit fall down his shoulders revealing his spotless skin, the only exceptions to the rule being the callouses on his palms and the long scar on his arm, a scar she hadn't noticed some days ago - "Don't hide, woman. I don't chase after meaningless things *like you*." - right after he said that, he unbuckled his belt and hung it loosely around his neck - "Unless you entertain me a bit."

It was not once second when his knee traveled up between her legs, causing her to panic internally. She did her best to keep her legs in that position. She held the sheets tightly and waited for the worse. She was ready. She had to do this. She had to get through-

- "Shaking much." - he mumbled, a tint of mock question in his tone. She opened her eyes to see that he simply observed her, an unfeeling gaze set on her. He was simply kneeling in between her legs, his two arms on each side of her hips, not touching either. When he saw her confused face, he sneered - "Did you really think that I fell for your looks, woman?"

- "A man like me," - He took the belt hanging loosely around his neck and set it on the nightstand - "isn't infatuated by *mere sexual appeal*." - he passed his rough hand to the back of his neck, fixing some of his messed up hair. He then smirked and took utmost pleasure in the moment where she realised that she has been played.

- "You bastard son of a-"- she hissed at the man, who was standing up from the bed to move to the coffee table. She was extremely embarrassed and he was dragging her honour around like dirty muddy sheets. In the meanwhile, he simply used a candle to light the other ones in the room, one by one, he looked at himself in the flames.

"So keep your legs spread open like that if you want to continue to humiliate yourself, *woman*." - he commented playfully, despite his serious rumble in the back of his throat. He finally set down the first candle and set the ceremonial suit on the chair. She sat down on the edge of the bed, feeling rage and yet, weak, knowing the situation she was in.

The second anything happened to the king, she would be blamed and most likely executed. So she held herself, telling herself to contain the anger inside. However, he always has been one to throw oil to the trail of fire - "And when you find time from your *unnecessary lascivious wants*, you'll find a sleeping robe in the attached room, *Kaiserin*."

The first and last time he referred to her by her title.

He sat down on the bed and took off a little cross accessory, which he left next to the belt on the nightstand.

Then, he layed down on the right side of the king-sized bed and rested his arm on top of his eyes, as if forgetting her existence.

These were times where her patience was tested and thankfully, her brain found the good reaction before she did something reckless. She got up without a word and found the night robe in the other room. It was not long before she had it on, and returned to the chambers. Walking towards the bed with a man already inside it was undeniably uncomfortable for her.

Thankfully, the size of the bed permitted them to have a significant space between them, a mutual accord between them which they settled in silence. She turned away from him, his presence making her uneasy. She was close to her objective, she just needed to endure. She's strong, she could do it.

Finally, sleep began to take her away, her eyes feeling the drop, before she joined the land of dreams.

»»----- ♔ -----««

The next morning, when she woke up early, she registered her

surroundings.

She looked to her side, and saw that he was no longer here.

She sat up slowly and glanced to where he was before, something shining on the center of his side of the mattress. She picked it up and sighed at the sight of it. Damn.

It was his wedding ring, brand new, gold and shining.

It seems she has some work before her.

»»————- ♔Wo Ist♔ ————-««
»»————-♔Mein Ende♔————-««

"Stay tuned, he is sick of love. . ."

4625 words

(A/N| Thank you for liking the new cover! More art to come. . .)

Chapter 9|Ruby Ribbons

'I would go out tonight
But I haven't got a stitch to wear
This man said, "It's gruesome that someone so handsome should care"
Ah, a jumped-up pantry boy
Who never knew his place
He said "Return the ring"
He knows so much about these things
He knows so much about these things'
-
|This Charming Man|

»»----- ♔ -----««

The ring shone brightly on the dull mattress. Her fingertips grazed the cold metal, before she held it up in her palm. It was small, meaningless and yet so heavy with the promise of a new fate. If only she knew what to do now. Every step is a near-cliff experience and she was dancing around the edge. Would the wind push her into this cold man's claws, or would she manage to come out with laurels despite the challenges in her path?

Her fist closed around the piece of jewelry, the coolness of the metal creating a small shock at the base of her skin.

She pushed the ring into her inside pocket, and stood in front of the mirror.

Her hair was still decorated from yesterday's event, lone petals hidden away in the threads of her mane. The cold breeze of the open balcony was the only consequence in this wide silence.

The makeup; a silent tragedy stilled on her face like glass. It could have been today she got married.

She pushed herself up and made her way towards her new vanity, courtesy of her now husband. Her fingers trailed through her hair, slowly plucking the petals and letting them drop onto the wooden desk.

She didn't bother to pick up the brush; her hair was still braided and she wanted to avoid a unnecessary mess. The maids weren't here this morning yet. Her pupils barely glanced at her reflection.

Was it because of her mistakes? She couldn't look at herself the same way. She was dolled up. It was good enough for a cover.

Her digits traced the polished wood of her desk as she got up straight. It was time to find a new dress and to change in fresher clothes. Her head turned around the room, but except the expensive furniture and few priceless objects, she didn't point out any new clothes.

Finally, in a stool near the chimney, a robe was spread over it. She soon recognised it as being the dress she had used before getting into the palace.

- "He really is determined to make me his personal fool." - she sighed out to herself. Her hands lifted the cloth into her hand, the texture rougher than anything that the people here wore. However, no royal animosity had ever stopped her yet. Giving up is what fools do.

Instead of changing into her old dress, she thought of a better purpose for it. She groomed her appearance quickly and stepped out, more confident than ever.

He wanted to play? He'll play by her rules. She crossed the hallways and politely greeted every noble she met, often intending to make good face. She scouted for a familiar face that would be able to help her.

He'll wish he had just left her alone.

After some wandering three corridors more, she found the place she had been looking for. The servants often gathered there to converse,

often grouped ready to be at the nobles' beck and call.

She approached a group of servants, and once she approached, most of the servants bowed their heads. Two of them were reluctant in showing respects to a woman that not so long ago was one of their own status, if not lower.

She payed no mind as she inquired, calmly - "Good morning. Is any of you free of duties at this time of day? I am seeking a favour." - Her tone was respectful, clarifying her boundaries, all while respecting the power difference.

The group of five looked at themselves. They were all currently busy, except one. A man turned his head to his friend and asked him with a glance. Said man was one of the two that weren't pleased with their new queen.

Although, before refusing, he sighed and placed a hand before his chest. "I am at liberty, your Majesty." He leaned his head in a short bow.

She offered a smile showcasing her contentment, and she then revealed the reason for her visit at the servants' quarters - "I am searching for the taylor's workshop. Would you be keen to accompany me?"

The man shortly accepted and walked by her side in order to present her the way. There wasn't much conversation until she affirmed one sentence:

- "You don't seem to like me." - she wasn't offended, if anything she was mostly curious as to why this man who she had never met before, felt so opposed to her.

- "Your Majesty" - he tried to ripost her claim, but she was faster than him.

- "Now, don't be afraid to state your opinion. I'm new here. I don't bite." - she said with a calm smile, enjoying the walk through the decorated corridors.

The man wasn't so willing to give in to comfort, despite her words.

He was still on his guard and averted his gaze from wherever it could cross hers. And she wasn't blind to it.

- "...Although I assume that our cherished Kaiser does, which translates your reaction." - she concluded herself.

This really was a house of puppets, afraid of their own threads being cut. They aren't wrong to do so. Everyone should look out for themselves.

- "What does Her Majesty know about the late queen?" - the man asked dryly.

That question landed very unexpectedly. He didn't seem like he was a fan of conversation, especially with her. She turned her head to glance at him. Why so sudden?

- "The late queen? Hasn't she suffered an accident? A tragic death, I heard." - she cited from her memory the pieces of information she was told. She stopped behind the man as he himself ended their walk in front of a door.

- "Right. An accident." - he stated as he opened the door before holding it open for her. Before she could go on about her day, he stopped her in her tracks with a sentence - "The walls of this palace hang more than just paintings. There are secrets that are clawed to these grounds and are forbid to be let out. They explain why accidents happen so often in here." - He cut himself short before he finished - "Her late Majesty would want you to be aware of the walls, Your Majesty."

As he left, one last thing left his lips before he was swallowed by surrounding servants - "Or enjoy the paintings, your Majesty. Their shades are one of a kind."

She smiled and held her dress lightly. He wasn't such a bad man. But he was right about the secrets in here; they gather on, piling on themselves. She wasn't blind, from the start she knew there's secrets haunting this place.

Although, she too brought her own secrets to this place.

She really was a perfect fit here.

As she crossed the doorway to the taylor's workshop, she made a mental note to track down that man and find out who he is and what he knows. He was too confident to speak to the Kaiserin about the place she owned.

Kaiserin.

She would have to get used to it soon.

The taylor's workshop was decorated in the finest trends of the decade, the silks he owned were displayed openly to demonstrate the richness of the country. Intricate designs and models were placed through the room. In the far left, a small desk had some scathered papers.

She raised one of those papers in her hand and studied the sketches. She successfully recognised some designs of clothing that would be introduced in the future. A lot of them were here. So this is where the ideas came from. It was fascinating how she could look at those original blueprints with her own eyes.

Then, she heard steps in the back of the room. They were careful, almost quiet, intending to not attract a lot of attention. From the sound, she could deduce that the person wasn't heavy, almost lightweight, and the steps sounded unsure. So a rather shy personality.

She turned around and smiled with quiet confidence - "Wonderful day, isn't it?" - when she saw the person, she noted the person was... An interesting character.

Her predictions were correct, as a thin man with longer brown hair and a carefully crafted beard stepped into the light. His nose was adorned by small round glasses. He had an interesting crafted tailcoat on him, and a kind air that no one could replicate.

- "Why yes, it is a lovely day.." - his fingers intertwined as he let his hands fall loose in front of himself - "how could I be of service to Her Lady?" - she was silently impressed how a person could look

soft as a cloud. He really was... Whimsical-looking.

She wondered if his beard was made of cotton candy - "Just taking a look at your designs, taylor." - at the sound of his blueprints being touched, he tensed.

- "If I may, my lady-..." - he attempted to reach out to take his sketches back, but before he could grab it, she raised them behind her head. The man, although taller than her, didn't dare to reach out to avoid tripping on her.

- "Can you make me one of these?" - she exclaimed calmly, whilst pointing at the drawn dress to illustrate her thoughts.

The taylor failed to respond and stuttered over his words - "I beg your pardon-?" - he was clearly nervous. These designs were private ideas he had sketched out in his free moments. He didn't dare to put them out in the open, and suddenly the queen requested one of them to be made.

- "I noticed your work. All those nobles, in the outside park, the corridors and even at my wedding. You were the one to make those clothes, weren't you?" - the man choked on his words, but she didn't let him talk yet - "But you've been following traditional ideas... And you want something new. I like the dress you drew. Make it for me. And could you also customise this one? It's pretty old." - she held up her old dress to show him.

He was at a loss for words, but she used that silence and filled it - "It is a big favour, but I need your help. I'll pay you handsomely." - she insisted before he could utter a word.

He finally recovered his voice and affirmed softly - "Her Lady doesn't need to worry.. I would be honoured to grant her this favour. And no pay is needed... My stay here is payment enough, her lady is still and..."

- "I insist to pay you." - she cut him off with a smile - "I would like to gather some artisans under my wing. I admire your work. Let me pay for your creations."

He gave up trying to oppose this. She clearly had an idea and she wasn't going to give it up. That passion, however, made him smile. It's been a long time since he's seen a person so free-spirited - "I accept then..."

He guided her to a couch, where negotiations usually happened. The conversation was full of exchanges about ideas and impressions. Both were from different backgrounds, and yet both found an area of common interest. It's been a while since she could rest her guards with someone.

Soon, he asked her to stand on a pedestal to take her exact measurements.

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- "Dresses?"

- "That is right, your Majesty. The queen was spotted leaving her room to then be guided to Albrecht's office."

- "Curious. Is she really a simple usurper?" - Prussia wondered out loud. He knew better than to be beguiled by her superficial intentions. That woman was hiding something, and he needed it to destroy her from inside.

- "My judgment cannot be compared to yours, your Majesty." - his general bowed his head and stepped out the moment Prussian Kingdom allowed him to excuse himself out.

What was she playing at here?

If she was trying to play on his nerves, she was succeeding and well.

On the other hand, he didn't offer her any new clothes to change into and he forbid her maids from seeing her today, in case one of them had some dress spare.

If she thought that he could play around him, she was wrong. Because while he doesn't shoot often attacks, his aim is spotless.

She had yet to learn what kind of opponent she was facing.

In fact, this was a fight to see who would learn the other completely, all secrets and intentions, just to crush them. But hell, he had no intentions of losing against his mere wife.

- "She has you lost in thought." - said a low heavy German accent.

His eyes were raised *after* he had firstly reached the dagger he kept for special occasions. He spotted the person in the room and sighed - "You need to learn how to knock. I thought I taught you better."

- "I wasn't being sneaky, it's all your merit." - the man with bright red eyes scoffed and leaned against the wall.

- "It's been a while since you decided to see me." - affirmed Prussia annoyed, as he threw the dagger back on the table, the metal emitting a clinking sound.

- "Didn't have a reason to." - said the man, placing his red eyes on every object in the room.

Prussia stood straight and stared the man down - "And now you do. End your useless excuses. What did you think you were doing there?" - he was obviously mad at the man, even if the other didn't seem to react.

- "I saw a job. I wasn't busy."

- "Are you trying to lie to me or to yourself? That was stupid and dangerous for both of us if someone else had found about you. And leaving the Crest there?" - He stared him down and added with a cold tone - "that was mostly egotistical from you."

That seemed to get a reaction out of the red-eyed man, as he punched the wall causing the whole room to shake. In seconds, his eyes seemed like the fire that ravaged everything and his hair, black like coal with grey lighting, ressembled the grounds that were left in rubble after the fire had passed through.

- "**Don't you dare talk to me about egoism. What the hell are you doing by taking a woman? Wasn't *her* death enough for you? There's no being more selfish than *you*.**" - Silence took place between the two men and the younger one, exclaimed with

spite - "You can try to take what's mine, but I won't let *you*. I'm not letting a mere woman be the reason I lose everything."

He left through the doorway.

Prussia stared at the door now empty, as he turned back to his seat and sat back against his seat. He rubbed his temples, but even that wasn't enough to get rid of the frustration that took over him.

- "We agree on something. She can't be let on a loose leash anymore."

There was silence for a second, before he threw the dagger on a portrait to take out his anger on something. The portrait teared like a thin sheet of paper.

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Prussia marched through the corridors, two guards behind his back. He needed to pick up a book of foreign finances from his bedroom.

The moment he opened the door and stepped in, he saw something colourful in the corner of his vision. His head turned and he saw piles of dresses folded everywhere on his desk.

His desk.

On the other side of the room, his wife was sitting on a stool, watching how servants brought in new dresses like a wave. He was going to stare her down, but his plans changed course when he saw her completely.

She was wearing a fitting purple dress, as she enjoyed her little tea. But what annoyed him the most, was that smug little look she hid behind her cup of tea, after every sip.

He was going to cut her and her compelling purple dress in ribbons.

And so.

He played her game.

He took some steps closer and he stood behind her, watching with her the scene unfolding in his own bedroom.

- "And what's this, woman?" - he stated with a fake interested tone, suggesting the annoyance he felt at this display of defiance.

- "I am updating my closet, dear. I got some pre-made dresses for the time my new clothes get sewn." - she enjoyed rubbing that pet name in his face, she knew he hated it with passion. His face might not betray anything, but his hands were clenching and unclenching at his side.

She made the servants bring the dresses straight in here, in his bedroom, or she should say theirs.

She wasn't just sending dresses here for convenience, no. She knew that the moment she sent the dresses here, something that is his room, she'll be standing her ground.

She's taking his space and making some for herself. It was a statement of her presence and of her existence in his world where he seems to live alone. It was a statement, or a threat if he wanted.

She was also wasting a lot of his money, which amused her. He had no way to get rid of her.

- "It seems you're getting comfortable in here. A little too much." - he didn't hide that last part, he wasn't even smiling. But he wasn't frowning. It was a neutral expression.

- "Only you could notice." - she turned her head backwards to look at him. Her heart had to slow down a beat when she saw that he was already looking at her. He wasn't saying nothing, so she asked to rub in the pain - "And? What do you think of the dress? It's purple, the same shade as your eyes."

- "I noticed." - he said immediately, as if annoyed that something so obvious had to be said out loud.

That took her back, she studied his face, mostly surprised of his claim- "You did?" - she inquired, curious.

- "Of course." - he seemed frustrated to talk about this - "only a fool would not notice it."

- "Huh. You have eyes." - he didn't show much reaction to the insult directed to him - "And? What do you think of the dress?" - she was wondering how much longer she could poke at him.

- "The dress? It's captivating, enchanting and elegant." - he said with a monotone voice as he stared at the last servants leave through the door, after placing all her dresses in their in-built closet.

She didn't expect that answer from him. Why was he playing her game? This was strange - "Really?"

- "Yes." - and for a split second, a sadistic glint could shine through his purple eyes - "Which is a pity, since your beauty is so *frail*, that even a dress such as this one *cannot* be able to enhance it."

He didn't even look down and he could feel her glare. *Good*. She deserved nothing but annoyance after the situation he put her through. Even if she's a rather benefitting pain.

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Soon after, Prussia left the room. He was going to spend the night in his office.

This was another bold way to remind her he wanted nothing to do with her.

But just before he left, he took the notebook he's been looking for.

It wasn't so bad, she had time to plan in the quiet of a room for her own.

As she sat down, she felt something hard against her hip.

She slipped her hand into her pocket and she got out the ring he refused to put on. She checked the engraving on it. His full name. Well, at least she knew it wouldn't get lost.

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Meanwhile, Prussia looked through the window, the moon was bright as ever, stars shining down on the people. Not him. Something comforted him in that.

- "Purple... Albrecht has an eye for these things."

»»----- ♔Wo Ist♔ ------««
»»----- ♔Mein Ende♔ ------««

"Stay tuned, he is afraid of light. . ."

3387 words

(A/N): Thank you for being patient with me, I had a lot going on, but I'm traveling right now, so I had some time to write.

Eyes.